

CHV 390 / PHI 390 / GSS 391
The Ethics of Love and Sex
Fall 2019
Mondays and Wednesdays 3pm-4:20pm
classroom: Marx 301

PROFESSOR

Elizabeth Harman
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Office: 1879 Hall, Room 120
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the moral principles governing love and sex. Questions to be addressed include: Do we ever owe it to someone to love him or her? Do we owe different things to those we love? Do we owe it to a loved one to believe better of him than our evidence warrants? What is consent, and why is it morally significant? Is sex between consenting adults always permissible, and if not, why not? Are there good reasons for prohibiting prostitution and pornography? Is it always irrational to get married? Should marriage be restricted to opposite-sex couples? Should we do away with marriage as it is currently conceived? Is monogamy morally wrong? Everyone has opinions about these matters. The aim of the course is to subject those opinions to scrutiny.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings: All assigned readings are mandatory and should be completed before the course meeting at which they are to be discussed. Often the readings are short but you may have to read them more than once to understand them and to be able to participate in discussion. Most readings will be available on Blackboard or on the web. You are required to *print out* all readings and *bring them* to the course meetings at which they will be discussed.

Attendance is mandatory. If you know you need to miss class, please email me before class. If you unexpectedly have to miss class, please email after class. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out from another student what happened and to get copies of notes and handouts. After doing that, if you have questions about what was covered, please do meet with me to discuss them. Some material will only be covered in class, and you will be responsible for that material on your papers and exam.

Everyone will be expected to participate in discussion *regularly*.

For each **argument analysis**, a short passage will be distributed. In 2-3 pages, you will explain the argument in the passage. Further instructions will be distributed with the first assignment.

We will have two **in-class debates**. Pro and con teams will be assigned, and you will prepare in advance with your team.

Late papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day late (for example, from A to A-, from A- to B+, and so on). Weekend days count. If you finish a late paper during a weekend, email it to me right away, and turn in a hard copy later. A paper is one day late if it is at all late; two days late if it is more than 24 hours late; three days late if it is more than 48 hours late; etc.

Extensions: If you think you need an extension on an assignment, please ask for it as early as possible.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is very serious. If I suspect plagiarism, I will refer the case to the University Committee on Discipline. If plagiarism is found to have occurred, this will result in an “F” on that assignment, and as a result, an “F” in the course (as well as whatever penalties are imposed by the University Committee on Discipline). For an introduction to what constitutes plagiarism, please read the guide “Academic Integrity at Princeton,” which can be found here:

https://odoc.princeton.edu/sites/odoc/files/950045_AcademicIntegrity2018-19_FINAL_PDF.pdf

Consult me if you have any further questions.

Dropping the Course: If you know you are going to drop the course, please email me right away.

Laptops, phones, and tablets may not be used during class without permission of the instructor; these should remain *out of sight, inside bags* during class. Students with disabilities may request, as a disability accommodation, permission to use electronics during class. Any student may request permission to use electronics, and permission might be granted even in the absence of a disability, though it is not easy to get permission in these cases. Any student who receives permission to use electronics during class thereby promises to use electronics only for class purposes.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

- 10% Class Participation, debates, and homework – includes one presentation discussing an argument found in a news source
- 5% First Argument Analysis (2-3 pages)
- 5% Second Argument Analysis (2-3 pages)
- 20% First Paper (six pages)
- 30% Second Paper – a presentation on the paper topic, plus the paper itself (eight pages)
- 30% Final Exam

An “F” on an argument analysis, on a paper, on the final exam, or for class participation will result in an “F” in the course.

(There is no midterm exam)

Major Deadlines:

Starting with the second lecture, **homework** is due for each lecture unless there is an argument analysis deadline, paper deadline, or debate on that day.

The usual homework assignment is this: raise two objections to the reading.

If there will be a **guest professor** leading class, then the homework is: ask two questions about the reading; these can raise objections, but they don’t have to; I will pass these on to the guest professor.

Homework should be *emailed* to me by 10pm, the night before the lecture, with the objections in the main text of the email (not in an attachment); the subject line of the email should be “HOMEWORK”.

Wednesday, September 25, 12noon: First argument analysis due (2-3 pages)

Each student will do an in-class **presentation** discussing an argument found in a news source. These will occur during the first half of the semester.

Monday, October 7, 12noon: Optional first draft of first paper due (6 pages)

Wednesday, October 16, 12noon: First paper due (6 pages)

Wednesday, October 23: First Debate

Wednesday, November 13, 12noon: Second argument analysis due (2-3 pages)

Each student will do an in-class **presentation** of the main arguments of her or his **second paper**. These will occur during the second half of the semester.

Wednesday, December 4: Second Debate

Monday, December 9, 12noon: Optional first draft of second paper due (8 pages)

Thursday, January 9, 5pm: Second paper due (8 pages)

January 2020: Final Exam (a take-home exam)

CALENDAR

This calendar is approximate. This list of readings is tentative. Readings may be removed, and **readings will be added**. Updates to the syllabus will occur. Go to Blackboard for the most recent version of the syllabus. Most readings will be available on the course Blackboard site, or can be found at the websites listed with the readings. For some readings, only part of the document is assigned. In these cases, the syllabus lists which selection should be read.

Wednesday, September 11: Introduction to the Course

Monday, September 16: Arguments & Consent I

- James Pryor, “Philosophical Terms and Methods” available at <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/vocab/index.html> (Read all six sections.)
- Alan Wertheimer, *Consent to Sexual Relations*, Chapter 5

Wednesday, September 18: Consent II

- Wertheimer, *Consent to Sexual Relations*, Chapters 6 and 7
- Schulhofer, “Taking Sexual Autonomy Seriously: Rape Law and Beyond”

*Each student will do an in-class **presentation** discussing an argument found in a news source. These will occur during the first half of the semester.*

Monday, September 23: Consent III: Coercion

- Kim Lane Scheppelle, “The Reasonable Woman”
- *State v. Rusk* 289 Md.230, A.2d 720 (1981) and notes.
- *State in the Interest of M.T.S.*
- Wertheimer, *Consent to Sexual Relations*, ch. 8

Wednesday, September 25: Consent IV: Deception and Mens Rea

- *People v. Evans* 85 Misc. 2d 1088, 375 N.Y.S. 2d 912 (1975)
- *Boro v. Superior Court*, 163 Cal. App. 3d 1224. 210 Cal. Rptr. 122 (1985)
- Wertheimer, *Consent to Sexual Relations*, ch. 9
- Tom Dougherty, “Sex, Lies, and Consent” *Ethics*
- First argument analysis (2-3 pages) due at 12noon

Monday, September 30: Consent V

Guest Lecture by Susan Brison (Dartmouth University)

- Susan Brison, “Why Rape is Not Sex Minus Consent” (manuscript)

Wednesday, October 2: Love I: One thought too many; What are the reasons for love?

- Willams 1981. “Persons, Character, and Morality”, in B. Williams, *Moral Luck*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harry Frankfurt, “The Reasons of Love”

Monday, October 7: Love II

- David Velleman, “Love as a Moral Emotion” *Ethics*
- Niko Kolodny, “[Love as Valuing a Relationship](#),” *Philosophical Review* 112:2 (2003): 135–89.
- Harry Frankfurt, “Autonomy, Necessity, and Love”
- Optional first draft of first paper (6 pages) due at 12noon

Wednesday, October 9: Love III: Is it morally permissible to privilege our loved ones?

- Peter Railton, “Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1984) 13: 2: 134-171.
- Samuel Scheffler, “Morality and Reasonable Partiality”
- Elinor Mason, “Can an Indirect Consequentialist be a Real Friend?” *Ethics* 1998

Monday, October 14: Love IV: Do we owe our loved ones the benefit of the doubt?

- Simon Keller, “Friendship and Belief.” *Philosophical Papers* 2004, 33: 329-51 [L] [SEP]
- Sarah Stroud, “Epistemic Partiality in Friendship.” *Ethics* 2006, 116: 498-524.
- Jennifer Lackey, “Why There is No Epistemic Partiality in Friendship”

Wednesday, October 16: Love V

Guest Lecture by Alexander Nehamas (Princeton University)

- Alexander Nehamas, “The Good of Friendship” (Chapter 6 of [On Friendship](#))
- the film “Thelma and Louise”
- First paper (6 pages) due at 12noon

Monday, October 21: Sexual Perversion

- Thomas Nagel, “Sexual Perversion”
- Roger Scruton, “Perversion”
- Alan Goldman, “Plain Sex”

Wednesday, October 23: First Debate

October 26 – November 3: Fall Break

*Each student will do an in-class **presentation** of the main arguments of her or his **second paper**. These will occur during the second half of the semester.*

Monday, November 4: Sexual Ethics and the Body

Guest Lecture by Anne Barnhill (Johns Hopkins University)

- Anne Barnhill, “Bringing the body back to sexual ethics”

Wednesday, November 6: Prostitution I

- Onora O’Neill “Between Consenting Adults”
- Joel Feinberg, “Legal Paternalism”
- Richard Arneson, “Joel Feinberg and the Justification of Legal Paternalism”

Monday, November 11: Prostitution II

- Debra Satz, “Markets in Women’s Sexual Labor”
- Martha Nussbaum, “‘Whether from Reason or Prejudice’: Taking Money for Bodily Services”

Wednesday, November 13: Pornography I

- J.L. Austin, selections from How To Do Things With Words
- Catherine MacKinnon, selections from Feminism Unmodified
- Martha Nussbaum, “Objectification”, Chapter 8 of Sex and Social Justice
- Second argument analysis (2-3 pages) due at 12noon

Monday, November 18: Pornography II

- Rae Langton, “Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts”

Wednesday, November 20: Marriage I: Should marriage be restricted to opposite-sex couples?

- Girgis, George, and Anderson, What Is Marriage?
- Some responses to Girgis, George, and Anderson

Monday, November 25: Marriage II: Beyond Marriage

Guest Lecture by Elizabeth Brake (Rice University)

- Elizabeth Brake, *Minimizing Marriage*
- Elizabeth Brake, “Is Polyamory Permissible?”
- Christopher Bennett, “Against the Polyamorous Civil Union Proposal”

Monday, December 2 (shorter class meeting, 3-4pm):

- Some student presentations

Wednesday, December 4: Second Debate

Monday, December 9: Marriage III: Is Divorce Promise-Breaking? Is Marriage Always a Mistake?

- Elizabeth Brake, “Is Divorce Promise-Breaking?”
- Dan Moller, “An Argument Against Marriage”
- Optional first draft of second paper (8 pages) due at 12noon

Wednesday, December 11: Marriage IV: Is Monogamy Morally Wrong?

Guest Lecture by Hallie Liberto (University of Maryland)

- Hallie Liberto, “The Problem with Sexual Promises”

Thursday, January 9, 2020:

- Second paper (8 pages) due by 5pm

January 2020: The Final Exam will be a take-home exam.