

HON 329-02(1421): Early Modern Sexualities: Early Modern Sexualities: The Body, Gender, and Sex before Western Modernization (Experimental)

Mon/Wed. 1:00-2:15
Argyros, Rm. 205



Kagama (hand-colored) print, Nishikawa Sukenobu, early 18th c.



Tako to ama, Hokusai, 1814

Instructor: Michael Wood (mwood@chapman.edu)

Office: DeMille, Rm. # 114

Office Hours: Mon.&Thur. 11:00-12:00, or by appointment

Required Texts: 1) Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton U.P., 1998)

2) Timon Screech, *Sex and the Floating World, 2nd Ed.* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2009)

3) Gregory Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*, (UCP, 2007)

4) Ihara Saikaku, *Life of an Amorous Man* (Tuttle, 1963)

5) Ihara Saikaku, *Life of an Amorous Woman* (NYC: New Directions, 1

6) Ihara Saikaku, *Great Mirror of Male Love*, P.G. Schalow, trans. (Stanford U.P., 1990)

Course Catalogue Description: Prerequisite, acceptance to the University Honors Program, a Japanese Studies minor or major, or consent of instructor. This course explores notions of gender, sexuality, courtship, and the body in Japanese societies before the arrival of Western values associated with the historical modernization project of the Nation-State. In Classical Japanese there is a verb, *onnaifu*, which roughly translates as, “to become female/woman.” I have never come across an equivalent term in a modern Japanese dictionary. The disappearance of language, as limited in usage as it might appear to us, is certainly regrettable. However, in the case of Japan, the moment of the “early modern” (*kinsei*)—a time characterized by an ever-growing awareness of “The West” and the ideas of civilization-driven empire, scientific-rational conceptions of life, and Judeo-Christian concepts of religion, Truth, and propriety—is the moment in which historians now see the accumulation of these small acts of cultural elision and induced amnesia, particularly in terms of how the body, gender, and sexuality had other normative ways of being/becoming. With the establishment of regulations meant to severely limit contact with Westerners and access to foreign texts, weapons, maps, and other contraband, the study of the West became the prerogative of elite *Rangaku* (or “Dutch scholars”), Confucian, and medical specialists. As Japan encounters a radically new worldview through a regulated fascination with the West, it does so in a relatively controlled context and in piecemeal. It is not until the mid-19th c. and what came to be referred to as American Gunboat Diplomacy, that Japan fully capitulated to 19th c. American/ Victorian infused values, legal codes, and social concerns regarding the body, sexuality, and gender. The two hundred plus years that Japan was able to hold off colonization by the West allowed for a relatively long period of incubation and processing of Japanese identity vis-à-vis Western nationalism. It also means that certain non-Western understandings and practices of sexuality, gender, and reproduction thrived and came to be documented in innumerable ways before they were ultimately (and sometimes reluctantly) deemed, if not inferior, abnormal and perhaps illegal. The course will study both primary sources related to traditional medicine, Buddhism, folk practices and cultural production in the form of print erotica, literature, theater, and travel guides, as well as secondary scholarship in social, cultural, intellectual, and political history, queer theory,

and gender studies. Examining the topic in an interdisciplinary manner that borrows from history, cultural anthropology, feminism, gender studies, literary theory, and art history, it is expected students will be able to apply the critical reading, thinking, and writing skills they develop in class in order to better understand and communicate how they understand the body, sexuality, and gender in today's contexts. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits. (VI, AI, SI)

Course Learning Outcomes: Upon Completing this course, students will:

Know: The student will develop historical, cultural, and theoretical knowledge of the ways in which texts (written, visual, and performative) embody, express, or challenge assumptions about gender, the body, sexuality, biology, psychology, and ethics. The student will study technical and formal aspects of cultural traditions, how they interact and how they change over time.

Comprehend: The student will understand how specific cultural works reflect norms, anxieties, beliefs, and challenges to assumptions embedded in daily life or the broader milieu.

Apply: The student will use information and concepts discussed in the course (readings, lectures, discussions) to better understand the significant role Westernization, modernization, and discourses of civilization, science, technology, medicine, health, etc. once and still play in national and historical discourse of the non-Western world. By looking at how clashing ideas between cultures get worked out over time, the student will also become familiar with world-historical processes that continue to have meaning-effects today.

Analyze: Students will become more adept at both analyzing visual and literary cultural artifacts. The semester-final project is an extensive research paper that will allow students to further develop research, writing, and argumentation skills, and will be required to present a thesis-driven argument based on research of secondary scholarship and primary historical/cultural sources.

Evaluate: Student will learn to better evaluate the social, historical, technological, and artistic significance of both Japanese pre-modern and early modern cultural artifacts, as well as become more aware of logical and ethical challenges to historical cultural/social analysis.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

- 1) a. Obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- 2) b. Sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- 3) c. Understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- 4) d. Developed effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

Assessment: Your overall grade for the course will be based upon attendance and participation in discussions,

Attendance, participation in discussions, doing readings	100 points
Two short papers (5-6 pp.) (2 x 50)	100 points
<i>Shunga</i> Presentation	50 points
Discussion of Reading	50 points
Final paper (12-15 pp.)	100 points

Attendance— It is expected that you attend every class prepared and dedicated to participate in the course. Any truancy beyond two absences will negatively affect your gross grade (1/3 of grade per absence beyond two). An excused absence will be considered at the instructor's discretion for extreme circumstances such as cases of family bereavement, public health threats, emergency hospitalization, etc. In such cases, it is the responsibility for the student to contact and consult with the instructor as soon as possible by e-mail, phone,

or in-person. The student may also be asked to provide documentation such as a physician's note, airline tickets, etc. Furthermore, it is important that everyone arrives to class on time and participates in the entirety of the class. Tardy arrivals or abrupt departures from class during the scheduled time will lead to a deduction of attendance points. Missing half of a class or more will be counted as an absence.

Paper #1, Due 9/23 What does Buddhism have to do with *Life of an Amorous Woman*? Please find one specific aspect of our Ihara Saikaku reading that relates to what we have learned about Buddhism in early-modern Japan. Try to develop a focused and detailed argument that engages specifics of the text.

Paper #2, Due 10/21 Ihara Saikaku's *Life of an Amorous Man* was so remarkable, in part, because it so directly challenges the orthodox Confucian understanding of fiction as an inherently distrustful mode of narrative based on lies and fabrication. But we may wonder as readers whether Saikaku was beholden to traditional Confucian cultural values, or instead, trying to write in a radically new way. In reading *Life of an Amorous Man*, how is desire reconfigured in relation to characters and readers? How does this narrative differ from what we might expect based on what we know of Buddhism and Japanese cultural history? Build your argument based on a close reading of the text. What is the value of this text? Was it simply meant to be a form of titillating entertainment?

Shunga Presentation: Please find an example of *shunga* (either in print or on the internet) that you find particularly interesting and to present in class. Please provide any background information concerning the production, circulation, and consumption of the print that you can glean. What do you make of the specific themes, content, semiotic referencing, and representational choices of the print? Most importantly, tell us what you find particularly interesting about the print.

Discussion of Reading: Six times throughout the semester we will discuss three academic monographs. I ask that two to three students each choose a student-led discussion date (see class schedule) and be prepared to explain what the reading argues and how you evaluate the argument.

Final Paper, due 12/12 This is a longer paper of approximately 15 pages. The topic is open, but dependent on approval of instructor. We will be turning in a pre-writing activity on 11/6.

Withdrawal

If you withdraw from the class, it is your responsibility to follow the appropriate procedures and meet the relevant deadlines established by Chapman University. The instructor reserves the right to withdraw a student from the class if the student is absent the first week of class or for three consecutive classes during the term.

Academic Integrity Policy: Chapman University is a community of scholars who emphasize the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the University. At their discretion the faculty may submit student work to plagiarism detection software such as *Turnitin* for review.

Students with Disabilities Policy: In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow proper notification procedure for informing your professor. This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Equity and Diversity Statement: Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy: <http://tinyurl.com/CUHarassment-Discrimination>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the Dean of Students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

Class Schedule

Date	Content	
8/26	Introduction	Begin reading <i>Red Thread</i>
8/28	Buddhism and the Problems of Desire	
9/2	Labor Day	Read short readings on BB
9/4	<i>Setsuwa</i> and Noh	
9/9	Student-led discussion <i>Red Thread</i> , Ch. 1-3	Finish <i>Red Thread</i>
9/11	Student-led discussion <i>Red Thread</i> , Ch. 4-6	Read <i>Life of an Amorous Woman</i>
9/16	The Rise of Literacy and the Seductions of Reading	
9/18	Fluid Genders	
9/23	Discuss <i>Life of an Amorous Woman</i>	Complete Short Paper #1
9/25	Urban Planning, Brothel Districts, and the Sociology of Sex	Read <i>Sex and the Floating World</i>
9/30	The Six Worlds and the circulation of consciousness	Work on <i>shunga</i> presentation
10/2	Student-led discussion <i>Sex and the Floating World</i> , Ch. 1-4	Work on <i>shunga</i> presentation
10/7	Student-led discussion <i>Sex and the Floating World</i> , Ch. 4-7	Read Selections of Hiraga Gennai (BB)
10/9	The Gaze and the Object	Read <i>Life of an Amorous Man</i>
10/14	Shunga Presentations	
10/16	Shunga Presentations	
10/18	Honors Event: John Carlos	
10/21	Discuss <i>Life of an Amorous Man</i>	Complete Short Paper #2
10/23	<i>Santo Kyoden</i> and the subversion of morals	Read selections from Santo Kyoden (BB)
10/28	Shikitei Samba and emergence of public space	Read selections from Shikitei Samba (BB)
10/30	<i>Nanshoku</i> and male-male desire	Begin reading <i>Cartographies of Desire</i>
11/4	Staging passion	
11/6	Kabuki and other theater forms	Submit final paper thesis and list of sources
11/11	Student-led discussion <i>Cartographies of Desire</i> , Ch. 1-3	
11/13	Student-led discussion <i>Cartographies of Desire</i> , Ch. 4-6	Read selected stories from <i>The Great Mirror</i>
11/18	Discuss final papers	
11/20	Shifting notions of civilization, propriety, and morality	
11/25	Thanksgiving	
11/30	Thanksgiving	
12/2	Female-Female desire and the asymmetry of gendered desire	
12/4	Crossing the early-modern divide: Return of the repressed	
12/12	Final Paper due, 8:00-10:30	