This course looks at premodern patterns of sexuality in Sunni and Shi‘i Muslim Middle East. Topics include the different types of heterosexual and same-sex relations including the institutions of marriage, slave concubinage, harem life, and status-defined homosexuality. Readings examine attitudes towards the body in Islamic culture; sexual pleasure and birth control; slavery, prostitution, and concubinage; temporary marriage in Shi‘i communities; and same-sex relations in medieval Arabic, Turkish, and Persian literature.


**These articles should also be downloaded from the server:**


Matthee, Rudi, “From the Battlefield to the Harem: Did women’s seclusion increase from Early to the Late Safavid Times?” Pp. 97-120 in *New Perspectives on Safavid Iran: Empire and Society*. Routledge, 2011.

**Course Requirements**

1. Seminar Membership

Membership in the seminar involves participation in its discussions and debates. Each week two students will be assigned to facilitate discussion. Each will turn in a summary/commentary on the assigned readings to the instructors by email before class. In class they will help the instructors facilitate discussion. Other students are also expected to write a short critical comment or question on the readings, which will be distributed by email before the seminar
begins. This allows everybody to have a stake in the discussion and for the instructors to gauge students’ level of understanding of the materials. Students will be evaluated based on their written and oral contribution to the seminar, their ability to engage other students and the faculty in the discussions. One half of your grade will be based on the quality of your participation.

2. Essay

Students have the choice to write an independent research project on a theme related to the material coverend in class, or to write a synthetic essay on a topic of their choosing based on the assigned readings. One half of your grade will be based on the quality of this essay.

Please note the following:

§ Students are expected and required to be present at every class session and to be prepared for class. If you know that you will have trouble arriving to class on time and/or staying for the entire session, I strongly counsel you not to enroll in the course.

§ All cellular phones, pagers, and alarms must be turned off during class.

§ Class sessions will be discussion focused. Please bring appropriate readings and texts to class with you. Give yourself sufficient time to complete the reading and prepare before coming to class. Moreover, give yourself sufficient time to understand assignment guidelines, to complete writing assignments accordingly, and to seek help early if you are having difficulties.

DATES AND ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1 (September 28)
Lecture: Paradigm Shifts from Medieval to Modern Times
Film: Color of Love

WEEK 2 (October 5)
Khuri, Fuad. _The Body in Islamic Culture_.

WEEK 3 (October 12)
Bouhdiba, Abdelwahab. _Sexuality in Islam_.

WEEK 4 (October 19)
Musallam, Basim. _Sex and Society in Islam_.

WEEK 5 (October 26)
Haeri, Shahla. _Law of Desire_.

WEEK 6 (November 2)
Mirzai, Behnaz A. “Qajar Haram: Imagination or Reality?”
Tucker, Judith E. “Woman as Wife and Man as Husband: Making the Marital Bargain”

WEEK 7 (November 9)
Zilfi, Madeline C. “Telling the Ottoman Slave Story”
Zarinebaf, Fariba. “Prostitution and the Vice Trade”
Matthee, “From the battlefield to the Harem”

WEEK 8 (November 16)
El-Rouayheb, Khaled. _Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World_.

WEEK 9 (November 23) Library Research

WEEK 10 (November 30):
Ze’evi, Dror. _Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East_. And DISCUSSION OF YOUR PAPERS

DECEMBER 6: PAPERS ARE DUE
**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Keddie, Nikki R. *Women in the Middle East*. Princeton: Princeton University Press,
2007.


