



Facilitator Notes

Kinship and Sexuality

Created by: Dr Tine Gammeltoft
University of Copenhagen

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This module was created by Dr Tine Gammeltoft and adapted by the Advancing Sexuality Studies short course team at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Contents

Contents	3
Background	4
Module approach.....	5
Overview.....	5
Required pre-reading	6
Optional pre-reading	6
Materials required.....	6
Module structure, materials and timing	7
Key to symbols and formatting	10
Introduction	12
Schedule	13
Module aims.....	13
Session 1. What does kinship have to do with sexuality?	15
Who are your relatives?.....	15
Pre-reading review	15
Mini-lecture & group discussion: American kinship	17
Group discussion: kinship and sexuality.....	19
Session 2. 'New kinship': challenges to conventional kinship thinking	21
Mini-lecture: gay marriage and IVF	21
Screening: ' <i>Two Men and Two Babies</i> '	25
Group work: ' <i>Two Men and Two Babies</i> '.....	26
Brainstorm.....	27
Session 3. 'New kinship' and sexual morality	28
Pre-reading review	28
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) experience-sharing	31
Preparing a 'new kinship' FGD	32
Running a 'new kinship' FGD	32
Analysis and feedback.....	33
Session 4. Engaging with political tensions: the role of critical sexuality scholars	34
Small group brainstorm.....	34
Striking a balance: group discussion.....	36
Conclusion	37
Further reading	39

Background

In many cultures, kinship and sexuality are perceived as intimately interconnected issues. Dominant sexual moralities often frame heterosexual relations within the union of marriage as the only ‘natural’ basis for family formation. There are currently a number of contemporary social and technological challenges to traditional sexual moralities and kinship practices. This module engages participants in questioning the ‘natural’ basis to understandings of kinship and explores how best to support innovative kinship practices from a Critical Sexuality Studies perspective.

The module aims to:

- Challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about what kinship means, questioning particularly the emphasis placed in many cultures on ‘biological’ relationships grounded in sexual intercourse
- Encourage participants to reflect upon dominant notions of sexual morality in people’s reactions to ‘alternative’ forms of kinship such as those established through gay marriage or assisted reproduction
- Explore how critical sexuality scholars may support and strengthen attempts in their societies to enhance innovation and creativity in kinship practices.

Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of how dominant sexual moralities often frame heterosexual relations within the union of marriage as the only ‘natural’ basis for family formation;
- Explore how social and technological challenges to conventional family arrangements may confront dominant cultural values on sexual propriety;
- Develop a critical understanding of how critical sexuality scholars may negotiate ‘traditional’ kinship values and support innovative kinship practices.

Module approach

The module's overall aim is to engage participants in active learning. Each session of the module includes a mixture of facilitator-delivered content and active participant engagement in the form of an independent exercise, small and large group discussions, and brainstorming exercises. Session 2 includes a documentary screening. The short course team advises that any review or amendment of the module maintains a focus on active learning.

Overview

Introduction

Participants will be given a brief description of the module approach, schedule, and aims.

Session 1. What does kinship have to do with sexuality?

In this session, participants are invited to question whether sexuality is always and necessarily the 'natural' basis for kinship.

Session 2. 'New kinship': challenges to conventional kinship thinking

Session 2 familiarises participants with the alternative forms of kinship practices that have emerged with the advent of new medical technologies for assisted reproduction and with the legalisation of gay marriage in many countries.

Session 3. 'New kinship' and sexual morality

Session 3 aims to bring into discussion how people in some settings may feel that 'new kinship' practices violate norms of sexual propriety.

Session 4. Engaging with political tensions and sensitivities: the role of critical sexuality scholars

Session 4 emphasises that kinship is a political terrain and challenges course participants to reflect on their own roles as critical sexuality scholars within this field.

Conclusion

The key learning and participant outputs are summed up in the conclusion.

Required pre-reading

(to be discussed in module group work)

- Edwards, J. (2007) 'Marriage is sacred': the religious right's arguments against 'gay marriage' in Australia, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9, 247-261.
- Inhorn, M. C. (2006) 'He won't be my son': Middle Eastern Muslim men's discourses of adoption and gamete donation, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 20, 94-120.
- Schneider, D. & Leach, E. R. (1968) Virgin Birth, *Man, New Series*, 3, 126-129.
- Schneider, D. M. (1968) Relatives. *American Kinship: A Cultural Account*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.

Optional pre-reading

- Carsten, J. (2004) Introduction: After Kinship? *After Kinship*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Clarke, M. (2008) New kinship, Islam, and the Liberal tradition: sexual morality and new reproductive technology in Lebanon, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)*, 14, 153-169.
- Franklin, S. (1997) Conception Among the Anthropologists. *Embodied Progress: A Cultural Account of Assisted Conception*. London, Routledge.
- Weston, K. (1998) Forever is a Long Time. *Long Slow Burn: Sexuality and Social Science*. New York, Routledge.

Materials required

Film 'Two Men and Two Babies' (2007) Dir. Emma Crimmings. DVD available for purchase from <http://bigandlittlefilms.com/home/news/post/-two-men-and-two-babies-dvds-available-now/>

A4 paper

Flipchart paper or whiteboard; marker pens

Module structure, materials and timing

Session & approach		PowerPoint	Other materials (provided or required)	Est. timing
Introduction, schedule & aims		Slide 1		10 mins
Schedule and module aims	Facilitator delivery	2-4		10 mins
Session 1. What does kinship have to do with sexuality?		5		70 mins
Who are your relatives?	Individual exercise	6	A4 paper	10 mins
Pre-reading review	Facilitator delivery; Group brainstorm	7	In Facilitator Notes; David Schneider pre-readings	15 mins
Mini-lecture & group discussion: American kinship	Facilitator delivery; Group discussion	8-9	In Facilitator Notes	15 mins
Group discussion: Kinship and sexuality	Group discussion	11	Flipchart paper or whiteboard; marker pens	30 mins
Session 2. 'New kinship': Challenges to conventional kinship thinking		12		145 mins

Mini-lecture: Gay marriage and IVF	Facilitator delivery	13-17	In Facilitator Notes	20 mins
Film screening: ' <i>Two Men and Two Babies</i> '	Screening	18-19	Film ' <i>Two Men and Two Babies</i> ' (2007). Director: Emma Crimmings.*	75 mins
Group work: 'Two Men and Two Babies'	Small group work	20	Flipchart paper or whiteboard; marker pens	30 mins
Brainstorm	Group discussion	21	Flipchart paper or whiteboard; marker pens	20 mins
Session 3. 'New kinship' and sexual morality		22		155 min
Pre-reading review	Facilitator delivery; Group discussion	23-25	In Facilitator Notes; Marcia Inhorn and Jane Edwards pre-readings	40 mins
Focus group discussion experience - sharing	Group discussion	26		15 mins
Preparing a 'new kinship' FGD	Small group work	27		20 mins
Running a 'new kinship' FGD	Focus groups	28		40 mins
Analysis & feedback	Small group work and feedback	29		40 mins
Session 4. Engaging with political tensions and sensitivities: The role of critical sexuality scholars		30		55 mins

Small group brainstorm	Small group discussion	31		25 min
Striking a balance	Group discussion	32		30 min
Conclusion & acknowledgements	Facilitator delivery	33-34	In Facilitator Notes	10 mins
Total				445 mins (7hrs 20mins)

* The film *Two Men and Two Babies* is available for purchase from <http://bigandlittlefilms.com/home/news/post/-two-men-and-two-babies-dvds-available-now/>

Key to symbols and formatting

Throughout these notes, the following symbols and formatting ‘clues’ have been used:

⇒ This symbol marks an instruction to the facilitator.

- Use of a bullet point indicates steps to be followed in completing an instruction.

|| This symbol, plus a different font which is larger and more widely spaced, indicates text to be read aloud. The end of the text to be read aloud will be indicated with the following symbol. ||

We have also indicated the points where a slide transition occurs on the PowerPoint presentation by inserting:

SLIDE

Module instructions

SLIDE 1

Introduction

(10 mins)

⇒ Read:

|| In many cultures, kinship and sexuality are perceived as intimately interconnected issues and dominant sexual moralities often frame heterosexual relations within the union of marriage as the only 'natural' basis for family formation. Conventional cultural perceptions of the linkages between kinship and sexuality are, however, challenged in multiple ways in the contemporary world. New technologies for assisted reproduction de-link sexuality from parenthood, sowing cultural doubts about what mother- and fatherhood mean and bringing into question whether sex is always the 'natural' basis for family formation. The advent of gay and lesbian families also contributes to questioning conventional ideas about kinship: these new ways of forming families suggest that kinship may be constituted in ways other than through biological relations.

This module examines relations between kinship and sexuality, exploring particularly how social and technological challenges to conventional family arrangements may confront dominant ethics of sexual propriety in different ways across different cultures. ||

SLIDE 2

Schedule

- ⇒ You will see that the module schedule does not include tea/coffee or lunch breaks.
Remember to insert these where appropriate.
- ⇒ Outline the schedule of the module to participants.

SLIDE 3

Module aims

⇒ Read (on slide):

|| The main aims of the module are:

- To challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about what kinship means, questioning particularly the emphasis placed in many cultures on ‘biological’ relationships grounded in sexual intercourse
- To encourage participants to reflect upon dominant notions of sexual morality in people’s reactions to ‘alternative’ forms of kinship such as those established through gay marriage or assisted reproduction
- To explore how ‘critical sexuality scholars’ may support and strengthen attempts in their societies to enhance innovation and creativity in kinship practices. ||

SLIDE 4

|| Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of how dominant sexual moralities often frame heterosexual relations within the union of marriage as the only ‘natural’ basis for family formation
- Explore how social and technological challenges to conventional family arrangements may confront dominant cultural values on sexual propriety
- Develop a critical understanding of how ‘critical sexuality scholars’ may negotiate ‘traditional’ kinship values and support innovative kinship practices. ||

SLIDE 5

Session 1. What does kinship have to do with sexuality? (70 mins)

⇒ Introduce the session by explaining that it is intended:

- To stimulate participants to think critically about what kinship means and how ideologies of kinship and sexuality are interlinked in many cultures
- To problematise notions of 'natural' and 'biological' kinship.

SLIDE 6

Who are your relatives? (10 mins)

⇒ Hand out a blank sheet of paper to each person. Ask participants to spend a few minutes writing a list of their relatives.

⇒ Next, ask participants to spend another few minutes writing a list of people they feel close to, but who are not relatives.

⇒ Tell participants that they will be returning to this exercise later in the module.

SLIDE 7

Pre-reading review (5 mins lecture + 10 mins discussion)

⇒ Explain to participants that this exercise will include a review and discussion of the following two readings (on slide):

- David Schneider, 1968a. Virgin Birth. *Man* (N.S.) 3(1):126-129.
- David Schneider, 1968b. Chapter Two: Relatives. In *American Kinship. A Cultural Account*, pp. 21-29. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

⇒ Read:

|| Kinship is about how human beings are related to each other. For researchers and activists who want to understand what keeps societies together, kinship is a key theme. Most of the texts for this module are written by anthropologists. This is no coincidence; in anthropology, kinship has (nearly) always been a topic of intense interest and lively debate. Your readings for this module include two texts by the American anthropologist David Schneider. His work has been seminal in anthropological kinship studies since he pointed out that much of what anthropologists (and others) have regarded as ‘natural’, foundational and universal aspects of kinship are, in fact, not ‘natural’ at all, but cultural ideas tied to a specific society and historical time.

In ‘Virgin Birth’, Schneider recounts a story from his fieldwork among the Yap, a people living on the Pacific Rim. ||

⇒ Ask participants the following question (on slide):

- What did Schneider learn from his fieldwork among the Yap?

⇒ Draw out the following main points:

- Regarding kinship: sexual intercourse and pregnancy are not necessarily seen as related in all cultures; i.e. childbearing may be understood in ways other than as directly linked to sexuality;
- Regarding fatherhood: what ‘a father’ is may be defined through a man’s ability to provide for a child rather than through connections of ‘blood’ or ‘genes’.

(10 mins)

SLIDE 8

Mini-lecture & group discussion: American kinship (15 mins)

⇒ Read:

|| When Schneider returned to the U.S., his Yap experience had made him aware that ideas about the links between sexuality and procreation may vary across cultures. He brought this insight with him when he studied kinship in North America: instead of taking for granted that we know what 'a relative' or 'a family' are, he saw these as questions that we must approach with an open mind.

In the chapter 'Relatives' from the book *American Kinship*, Schneider offers a systematic examination of American ideas about what a relative is. He approaches this in the same way that an anthropologist would approach the study of a strange, exotic country, trying not to take for granted that we know what 'a brother', 'a wife' or 'an aunt' is. He shows how people in America can be related through 'blood' or through 'marriage'. The *blood relationship* is defined in biogenetic terms, as a result of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. Blood relationships are seen in America as 'facts of nature', which cannot be altered through social events such as separation, disagreements, or death.

SLIDE 9

Marriage differs from the blood relationship, as there is no biogenetic bond: a marriage tie is not considered to be natural and material like the blood relationship, but can be terminated at will. Marriage partners are tied to each other by relationship alone, not through any natural substance. So where blood relations are tied together through 'the order of nature', it is the 'order of law' that defines marriage partners as relatives.

In sum, Schneider shows how things that Americans tend to take as 'facts of nature' are actually facts of culture. Rather than given and self-evident, American notions of kinship are cultural ideas; they are human inventions, not natural facts. In American ideas about kinship, *sexual intercourse* is centrally placed: it is through sexual intercourse that blood relationships are formed. Schneider therefore characterises sexual intercourse as a 'central symbol' of American kinship. ||

SLIDE 10

- ⇒ Facilitate a discussion with the whole group using the following questions (on slide):
- Do you see similar 'cultural orders' in your country?
 - If yes, how are 'nature' and 'law' defined? (For instance, 'nature' can refer to genetics or to blood, 'law' to civil law, religious law, or custom law)

- Can you identify other kinds of cultural orders that define kinship for people in your country? (For instance, kinship may be defined through the sharing of meals, through social care and support, etc.)
- Could ‘other’ cultural orders help us to think about kinship in ways that go beyond the dichotomy between the biological and the social?

(10 mins)

SLIDE 11

Group discussion: kinship and sexuality (30 mins)

- ⇒ Ask participants to look again at the ‘Who are your relatives’ exercise and ask for examples of who they defined as a relative and who as a non-relative.
- ⇒ Write these examples on the whiteboard/a flipchart. (The aim is to get participants to ‘take apart’ kinship in their own country and reflect on the differing ways that kinship can be constituted culturally.)
- ⇒ Ask participants to discuss the following questions (on slide):

Principles of kinship

- What distinguishes a relative from a non-relative in your accounts?
- Do definitions of a relative follow orders of ‘nature’, orders of ‘law’ or other orders?
- Is the ‘blood’ relationship that is produced through sexual intercourse as important in your country or culture as in Schneider’s America, or are other things more important?

Practices of kinship

- In practice, how are differences defined between a relative and a non-relative in your country or culture?
 - Are there particular expectations that you have of your relatives?
 - Are relations with relatives culturally expected to be more enduring in terms of time than relations with non-relatives?
- ⇒ Sum up the exercise by noting that in many cultures, ‘real’ kinship is seen as defined through biology. Since ‘blood relations’ are created through sexual

intercourse, this places sexuality at the heart of kinship in cultures across the world. **(30 mins)**

SLIDE 12

Session 2. 'New kinship': challenges to conventional kinship thinking

(145 mins)

⇒ Introduce the session by explaining that it is intended:

- To highlight how 'new' forms of kinship (established through gay marriage and assisted reproduction) may challenge conventional ideas about what relatedness means;
- To stimulate participants to reflect on their personal reactions to 'new' kinship forms and to consider the cultural basis for their own reactions.

SLIDE 13

Mini-lecture: gay marriage and IVF (15 mins lecture + 5 mins questions)

⇒ Read:

|| In many cultures, dominant ideas about kinship place primacy on 'blood bonds' and define the conjugal unit as the only morally appropriate nexus for childbearing. Yet across cultures, there have always been many creative ways of having children and building families. People have had children through donor inseminations, non-marital or extramarital relationships, and children have been brought up through social arrangements such as foster care or adoption. Often, however, such 'alternative' forms of family formation have remained socially discrete and private, while official kinship ideologies have maintained an emphasis on blood relationships. But in recent years, novel ways of having children have flourished in Europe and North America, attracting considerable public and political attention and openly challenging conventional ideas about kinship.

In this session, we look closely at two social phenomena that have been particularly culturally challenging: gay marriage, and assisted reproduction. In the 1980s, it became increasingly common for gay people in the U.S. and Europe to live together and establish 'alternative families'. Gay people began to demand recognition of kin relationships that were grounded in neither 'nature' nor 'law', but 'chosen' by themselves. This made it clear that kinship is not just a question of biology, but also a *political project*.

SLIDE 14

As a result of gay advocacy and activism, gay marriage has been legalised in some countries. The first country to allow gay marriage was the Netherlands in 2001. Since then, Belgium, Norway, Spain, Canada, South Africa, and several states in the United States have followed. Some countries allow gay couples to enter into 'registered partnerships' which are nearly equal to marriage, with the exception, in some countries, of adoption rights. Today, registered partnerships are legal in approximately eighteen countries, most of them European, but including also Uruguay and Ecuador, and some parts of Brazil, Argentina, and the United States.

SLIDE 15

At the same time as gay kinship emerged, medical advances in the realm of assisted reproduction changed and extended the ways in which children can be produced. In-vitro fertilisation (IVF) was first applied with success in Great Britain in 1978, and has since then become a standard part of reproductive medicine across the world.

In IVF, ova and semen are mixed in a Petri dish and the fertilised ova placed in the woman's uterus. This has made it possible for pregnancy to occur in the absence of sexual intercourse, thus de-linking sexuality from reproduction. In the case of male infertility, IVF may be combined with semen donation, thereby enabling the couple to have a child to whom only the mother is genetically related. The use of donated semen or ova in this procedure is often legally regulated and, in some countries, prohibited.

Surrogacy arrangements add further complexity to the ways in which children can be brought into being. A surrogate is a woman who agrees to become pregnant and carry a child for another couple. There are two kinds of surrogacy: 'traditional' and 'gestational'.

SLIDE 16

Traditional surrogacy can remedy the infertility of a wife by allowing her husband to become the genetic father of a child that is carried by

another woman. In 'traditional' surrogacy, therefore, the woman who carries the child is also the child's genetic mother.

SLIDE 17

Gestational surrogacy, in contrast, is a remedy to childlessness that allows the contracting couple to become the genetic parents of the child. In gestational surrogacy, an embryo produced through IVF treatment is implanted in the uterus of the surrogate mother, i.e. she is not genetically related to the child she carries. Surrogacy, in other words, de-links motherhood from pregnancy, splitting the meanings of 'mother' into three different categories: 1) the woman who contributed the ovum, 2) the woman who gestated the child, 3) the woman who raises the child. At present, commercial surrogacy is legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, Israel, India, Georgia, and some states in the U.S., while altruistic surrogacy is allowed in the U.K., Canada and New Zealand. Surrogacy is a morally controversial practice, not just because it unsettles ideas about kinship, but also because of the unequal economic relationships that are often involved - especially when couples from affluent countries contract surrogate mothers in developing countries.

The common factor in donor insemination, surrogacy, and IVF procedures involving donated ova or semen is that they involve a *third party* in the process of reproduction where otherwise only two persons

would be involved. To many people, this brings to mind adultery and illegitimacy. As we shall discuss in session 3, the application of new medical technologies therefore often cause strong social, political, and religious reactions. ||

⇒ Facilitate a question and answer session based on the lecture.

- Clarify any questions among participants. **(5 mins)**

SLIDE 18

Screening: 'Two Men and Two Babies' (2007) (75 mins)

⇒ Read the following introduction to the film:

|| Against the backdrop of a conservative political environment, gay couples are testing the boundaries of traditional marriage and family values, and are overcoming considerable legal and cultural limitations to have children. This documentary takes audiences into the lives of Tony Wood and Lee Matthews, one of the first Australian gay male couples to take the controversial step of creating a new family through commercial surrogacy in the United States. The film looks at Tony and Lee's overwhelming desire to have a child, their decision to pursue commercial surrogacy, and their fraught journey to Cedar Rapids, Iowa to experience the birth of their son Alexander to a surrogate, Junoa. In the documentary, it is five years since Alexander's birth, and Tony and Lee now have a second child, Lucinda through surrogacy. The film documents the intervening years since Alexander's

birth and provides a unique insight into the world of this alternative family. ||

SLIDE 19

⇒ Encourage participants to think about the following questions during the film (on slide):

- What emotions do you experience during the film?
- How do the people involved actively construct kinship?
- What are the differences between the clinicians and the clients?
- How do the people in the film think about and use biological terms for kinship?

⇒ Screen the film.

⇒ Following the screening of the film, ask if anyone has comments or questions. If so, respond briefly.

SLIDE 20

Group work: 'Two Men and Two Babies' (20 mins)

⇒ Divide participants into small groups.

⇒ Ask participants to discuss the following questions (on slide):

- Discuss your immediate reactions to the film and make a list of 'positive' and 'negative' reactions: What made you feel uplifted? What made you feel sceptical? (For instance: a positive reaction could concern the love between Erik and Mark, a negative reaction could consist in doubts about the abilities of two men to care adequately for a newborn infant.)
- If you showed this film in the neighbourhood where you live, how do you think people would react? **(15 mins)**

- ⇒ On the whiteboard/a flipchart, make two columns headed ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ respectively.
- ⇒ Ask participants from each group to come forward and list their group’s reactions under the appropriate headings. **(5 mins)**

SLIDE 21

Brainstorm

(20 mins)

- ⇒ Referring to the reactions listed on the whiteboard/flipchart, ask participants to brainstorm the following questions (on slide):
 - What role does biology play in the reactions you have listed?
 - Can you identify underlying assumptions about biologically ‘proper’ ways of having children? (For instance: a child should be made by one man and one woman, the primary caregiver for an infant should be the mother, etc).
 - Is there anything ‘natural’ about the assumptions you have mentioned: are these assumptions grounded in nature or in culture?
- ⇒ Sum up the session by emphasising that human beings devise a wonderful variety of different ways of living and living together; none of these are ‘natural’ in themselves. Rather, they are *made* natural by people who mobilise the idea of nature/biology to strengthen their claims. **(20 mins)**

SLIDE 22

Session 3. 'New kinship' and sexual morality (155 mins)

⇒ Introduce the session by explaining that it is intended:

- To provide insights into the ways in which dominant sexual moralities may shape people's responses to new forms of kinship;
- To give participants hands-on experience researching the role of sexual moralities in local reactions to 'new kinship'.

SLIDE 23

Pre-reading review (20 mins lecture + 10 mins questions)

⇒ Start by briefly outlining the main points of the text. Read:

|| In 'He Won't Be My Son', Inhorn examines moral attitudes to adoption and egg/semen donation among Lebanese Muslim men who are undergoing IVF treatments with their wives. In Islam, she writes, biological kinship is emphasised and a 'blood relationship' is the only religiously recognised basis for paternity. Adoption is explicitly forbidden in Lebanon, and infertile couples who adopt a child or seek to have a child with the help of donor sperm, eggs or embryos do so in secrecy. Lebanese men in Inhorn's research felt that an adopted or a donor child would not be *their* child, but another person's child. To support this attitude, they referred to religious injunctions that define the use of a third-party donor as a form of adultery and categorise a child conceived with the help of a donor as an illegitimate child. In the words of one man, 'In Sunni Islam, if you breastfeed someone else's baby, it becomes a brother or sister to your child. Egg donation is much more strong than that. It's like bringing a stranger into your

family’. Yet Inhorn also shows that a few of the men were, as she phrases it, ‘moral pioneers within a generally conservative religious climate’. By considering adoption or the use of donor eggs or sperm, they were contesting dominant religious norms.

In short, in the Lebanese social world described by Inhorn, new forms of medically assisted family formation are seen as morally problematic. If a third party enters into the process of reproduction, procreation is located outside of the sphere of marriage. Such ‘non-marital’ reproduction carries connotations of adultery and illegitimacy and violates deeply held religious beliefs about ‘proper’ – i.e., marital and blood-based – relations of sexuality and kinship. ||

⇒ Check: Did any participants see other points of the text as particularly significant?

- Ask if there any questions about the article. **(5 mins)**

⇒ Briefly outline the main points of the Edwards text.

⇒ Read:

|| Jane Edwards examines the arguments advanced by the religious right when legislation was passed in Australia in 2004 to prohibit gay marriage. According to Edwards, the religious right played a core role in advocating against the legalisation of same-sex marriage. This happened through arguments that defined heterosexual marriage as ‘sacred’ and contrasted it to ‘profane’ sexual relationships (i.e., relationships outside the heterosexual marital union).

In the rhetoric of the religious right, heterosexuality is 'sacred' and normatively right because it is an expression of 'nature'; that is, it is instituted by God rather than being created by humans. Same-sex relationships have no 'biological' function, according to the religious right; they are not 'natural' and therefore do not offer the same protective environment for children. People who co-habit instead of getting married are criticised on the same grounds: only marriage, according to religious conservatives, offers a secure living environment for children. Marriage, and the regulation of sexuality that this institution entails, is seen as key to the maintenance of social order.

Religious conservatives emphasise particularly that the relationships between fathers and children are stronger when people are married. According to Edwards, this shows a deep concern with the status of *masculinity* in Australia: people fear that the role of men is being devalued as women become less dependent on marriage. At issue are fears about the erosion of male authority, and anxieties that social order will be replaced by disorder and anarchy if the 'natural' heterosexual family is replaced by other ways of organising intimate human relations. In sum, the moral panic about gay marriage expresses deeply felt fears regarding social order, and the rhetoric of the religious right gains force by fusing political and religious arguments. ||

- ⇒ Check: Did any participants see other points of the text as particularly significant?
- ⇒ Ask if there any questions about the article. **(5 mins)**

SLIDE 24

- ⇒ Ask participants what they see as the shared themes in the two texts. **(10 mins)**

SLIDE 25

- ⇒ After listening to participants' responses, sum up (on slide). Both articles:
- Describe local reactions to alternative forms of kinship.
 - Show how negative reactions to 'new' forms of kinship are closely linked with ideas about sexual morality.
 - Show that such ideas about sexual morality are very deeply felt: 'disorderly' forms of sexuality tend to generate very strong feelings of fear and anxiety in many people.
 - Show that ideas about what is natural are often linked to religion or to biology, and that ideas about the natural often support ideas about what is morally proper.
 - Give evidence that nature offers a questionable foundation for moral standpoints once we see that ideas about what is 'natural' are socially constructed.

SLIDE 26

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) experience-sharing (15 mins)

- ⇒ Read:

|| In many settings, religiously based sexual moralities play key roles in people's perceptions of alternative kinship practices. What role does

sexual morality play in attitudes to ‘new kinship’ in your country or culture? To explore this question, in this session participants will work on two focus group discussions, one focuses on ‘gay marriage’, and the other focuses on ‘sperm donation’. ||

⇒ Ask participants about their experiences of conducting focus group discussions (FGDs) (on slide):

- Does anyone have experience running FGDs?
- What kinds of information might FGDs elicit?
- What sorts of questions might work best in FGDs? **(15 mins)**

SLIDE 27

Preparing a ‘new kinship’ FGD (20 mins)

⇒ Ask participants to divide themselves into two groups (on slide):

- The task of group 1 is to develop questions for a focus group discussion to explore attitudes to gay marriage.
- The task of group 2 is to develop questions for a focus group discussion to explore attitudes to sperm donation. **(20 mins)**

SLIDE 28

Running a ‘new kinship’ FGD (40 mins)

Once each group has drafted a series of questions, ask each group to conduct a focus group discussion with the other group as research subjects (20 minutes each). Guidelines for both groups (on slide):

- Assign a moderator for the group. Other group members act as observers and note-takers.
- Conduct the focus group discussions with the other group as subjects.
- It is the moderator’s role to pose the questions and ensure that all subjects have an opportunity to respond.

- Subjects are encouraged to express personal opinions (rather than playing roles) – but if relevant, some participants may want to play ‘devil’s advocate’ and take more conservative or radical positions.

(40 mins)

SLIDE 29

Analysis and feedback

(40 mins)

- ⇒ Give both groups 20 minutes to analyse the material generated in each of the focus groups. The analysis should be informed by the overall content of the module, interpreting the standpoints expressed in the FGDs through module themes of kinship, sexuality and sexual morality. **(20 mins)**
- ⇒ On the basis of the focus group analysis, ask members of group 1 to report back about the attitudes to gay marriage that were voiced in the FGD. **(5 mins)**
- ⇒ Ask members of group 2 to report back about attitudes to sperm donation expressed in the FGD. **(5 mins)**
- ⇒ Ask each group (on slide):
 - ‘What recommendations would each group make with regard to future research on gay marriage and sperm donation from a Critical Sexuality Studies perspective?’ **(10 mins)**

SLIDE 30

Session 4. Engaging with political tensions: the role of critical sexuality scholars (55 mins)

⇒ Introduce the session by explaining that it is intended:

- To challenge participants to reflect critically on their own role in engaging with conservative forces in their own country that promote ‘traditional’ norms of kinship and sexuality
- To generate discussion of how course participants as ‘critical sexuality scholars’ may support and strengthen attempts in their societies to enhance innovation and creativity in kinship practices.

SLIDE 31

Small group brainstorm (20 mins)

⇒ Read:

|| Across the world, the new forms of kinship that we have discussed in this module make many people feel uneasy, anxious, and upset. ||

⇒ If such feelings have surfaced in participants’ reactions to the film or in the focus group discussions, refer to these here.

⇒ Continue to read:

|| To many people, sexual propriety and orderly relations of kinship are matters of vital importance. People often go to great lengths to give the appearance that cultural ideals are maintained and that sexual relations are restricted to the marital sphere. ||

⇒ Ask participants to brainstorm the following question in small groups (on slide):

|| In your own social context, can you think of examples where cultural values linking procreation and sexuality within the institution of heterosexual marriage create exclusions, or silences around particular kinship practices? ||

(Examples could include: young couples who prefer late-term pregnancy terminations to having a child out of wedlock, thus keeping secret the fact that they have engaged in premarital sex; couples who conceal their use of IVF treatments due to social stigma around infertility; women who have their hymens restored after premarital sex; infertile couples who undergo costly IVF treatments in secrecy rather than adopting a child; married individuals who engage in covert extramarital relations, perhaps with people of the same sex; and so on). **(15 mins)**

⇒ Ask a participant from each group to describe their group's examples.

(5 mins)

⇒ Read:

|| Now, the question this raises is: if these cultural ideals (or illusions) are so important to people, if people go to such great lengths to keep up appearances that they maintain dominant norms of sexual propriety – then how do we as policy-makers, program managers, or critical sexuality scholars respond to these values and feelings? In what ways may we engage constructively with people who insist on norms of kinship that define heterosexual marriage as sacred and only accept as legitimate children produced through marital sexual intercourse? ||

SLIDE 32

Striking a balance: group discussion (30 mins)

⇒ Invite participants to discuss their own roles as critical sexuality scholars working in a society where many people adhere to traditional norms of sexual propriety. As a starting point for discussion, read out the following question (on slide):

|| How can we as critical sexuality scholars strike a balance between a) respecting local people's sense of what is moral and valuable, and b) advancing more open approaches to kinship and sexuality as discussed in this module? || (30 mins)

SLIDE 33

Conclusion

(10 mins)

- ⇒ Introduce the conclusion by explaining that it is intended to:
- Provide an overview of concepts and themes treated in the module.
- ⇒ Read:

|| In session 1 we learnt that, in many cultures, kinship and sexuality are seen as intimately interlinked. This close link between sexual intercourse and kinship is, however, a cultural construct rather than a biological given. This was evidenced in session 2 where we looked at new and alternative practices of kinship, with attention given to gay marriage and assisted reproduction. ||

- ⇒ Add a brief summary of what came out of participants' discussion of the film *Two Men and Two Babies*.

SLIDE 34

|| People's reactions to 'new' forms of kinship are often grounded in their ideas about what constitutes 'morally proper' sexual relations. These ideas, in turn, are often linked to religion or biology. Yet once we see that 'the natural' is socially constructed, it becomes evident that ideas about nature provide a questionable basis for moral standpoints. Strong moral feelings and values are at play in this field and interventions, through research or advocacy, are balancing acts.

There are many ways of living together. Just as it is important that society at large accepts people practising 'new' forms of kinship, it

may also be necessary for critical sexuality scholars to accept that some people prefer to maintain 'old' values of sexual propriety, as long as they don't impose them on others. 'New kinship' can be seen as a challenge to local cultural traditions and conventions, and we must respect that it is a challenge not everyone wants to take up.

Innovation and creativity in kinship practices can be supported in many ways, such as through participation in public debates, through the conduct of critical social science research, or through alliances with interest groups and NGOs working to maintain and enhance sexual and reproductive rights. ||

(10 mins)

SLIDE 34

Short course acknowledgements.

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