



Module Outline for Course Participants

Young People and Sexuality

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This module was created by Dr Claire Maxwell and Dr Ian Warwick 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.

Abstract

Young people's sexualities have often been a focus for concern among professionals, parents, carers and other adults. This module takes as its starting point the position that understandings of concepts such as 'sexuality' and 'youth' are socially and culturally constructed. The module examines the relationships between this construction of meaning and the ways in which we understand and respond to sexuality and young people. Issues of regulation and resistance will also be examined, as will implications for practice.

Module aims

To:

- Introduce students to the socially constructed nature of youth sexualities
- Explore the many structures and factors which shape youth sexualities
- Examine how young people are resisting some of the structures which regulate their sexualities and ways in which young people might demonstrate agentic practice
- Assess the various research approaches used to study youth sexualities
- Support students to reflect on and identify ways of furthering their professional practice around youth sexualities.

Participants will:

- Be aware of ways that young people's sexualities are socially constructed
- Be familiar with a number of factors and structures which shape young people's gender and sexualities and ways in which young people are regulated by these but also resist them
- Be able to identify a number of approaches to research, research designs and methods used, that contribute to our understanding of young people's sexualities
- Demonstrate what they have learned and be able to apply this to their own professional practice.

Required pre-reading

- Allen, L. (2003) Girls want sex, boys want love: resisting dominant discourses of (hetero)sexuality, *Sexualities*, 6, 215-236.
- Quach, T. (2008) Femininity and sexual agency among young unmarried women in Hanoi, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 10, S151-S161.
- Wight, D., Plummer, M. L., Mshana, G., Wamoyi, J., Shigongo, Z. S. & Ross, D. A. (2006) Contradictory sexual norms and expectations for young people in rural Northern Tanzania, *Social Science and Medicine*, 62, 987-997.

Materials required

Participants are asked to bring to the module examples of representations of young people from their local context. This can include (but is not limited to) research reports; advertisements; media images or media reports.

Overview of module

Introduction, schedule, aims and pre-reading review

Participants will be given an overview of the module, the schedule will be explained and the module aims provided. In addition, the module will begin by reviewing participants' understanding of the pre-readings.

Session 1. The social construction of young people's sexualities

This session will combine personal reflection, group work, review of textual or visual representations of young people (provided by participants) and a mini lecture to examine understandings of 'young people' per se, and young people's sexualities in particular.

Session 2. Regulation and resistance

Beginning by referring back to two of the three pre-readings, this session will look more closely at ways in which young people's sexualities are regulated—and ways in which young people resist such regulation. The session will combine group work with a mini lecture.

Session 3. Implications for practice

Participants will be presented with three examples of sexuality research on and with young people and asked to compare and contrast the research approaches chosen. The facilitator will also provide a review of the research differences and similarities, as well as a review of the advantages of each approach. The session will conclude with a group discussion on the importance of young people's sexualities to researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, followed by the opportunity for participants to reflect on their own practice in the light of any module lessons learned.

Further reading

(including lecture bibliography)

- Addlakha, R. (2007) How young people with disabilities conceptualize the body, sex and marriage in urban India: four case studies, *Sexuality and Disability*, 25, 111-123.
- Aggleton, P., Chase, E. & Rivers, K. (2004) *HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care Among Especially Vulnerable Young People: A Framework for Action*. Southampton, Safe Passages to Adulthood.
- Egan, R. D. & Hawkes, G. (2008) Imperilled and perilous: exploring the history of childhood sexuality, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21, 355-367.
- Farrer, J. (1999) Disco 'super-culture': consuming foreign sex in the Chinese disco: cosmopolitan dance culture and cosmopolitan sexual culture, *Sexualities*, 2, 147-166.
- Higgins, L. T. & Sun, C. (2007) Gender, social background and sexual attitudes among Chinese students, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9, 31-42.
- Ingham, R. & Aggleton, P. (Eds.) (2006) *Promoting Young People's Sexual Health: International Perspectives*. London, Routledge.
- Izugbara, C. O. (2008) Masculinity scripts and abstinence-related beliefs of rural Nigerian male youth, *Journal of Sex Research*, 45, 262-276.
- Leonard, L. (2000) 'We did it for pleasure only': hearing alternative tales of female circumcision, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6, 212-228.
- Marston, C. (2004) Gendered communication among young people in Mexico: implications for sexual health interventions, *Social Science and Medicine*, 59, 445-456.
- Muñoz-Laboy, M., Weinstein, H. & Parker, R. (2007) The Hip-Hop club scene: gender, grinding and sex, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 9, 615-628.
- Nielsen, H. B. & Rudberg, M. (2007) Fun in gender—youth and sexuality, class and generation, *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 15, 100-113.
- Överlein, C., Aronsson, K. & Hydén, M. (2005) The focus group interview as an in-depth method? Young women talking about sexuality, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8, 331-344.
- Paechter, C. (2003) Masculinities and feminities as communities of practice, *Women's Studies International Forum*, 26, 69-77.
- Pattman, R. (2005) 'Boys and girls should not be too close': sexuality, the identities of African boys and girls and HIV/AIDS education, *Sexualities*, 8, 497-516.
- Pilkington, H. & Johnson, R. (2003) Peripheral youth: relations of identity and power in global/local context, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 6, 259-283.
- Renold, E. (2007) Primary school "studs": (de)constructing young boys' heterosexual masculinities, *Men and Masculinities*, 9, 275-297.
- Schäfer, N. & Yarwood, R. (2008) Involving young people as researchers: uncovering multiple power relations among youths, *Children's Geographies*, 6, 121-135.
- Senior, K. A. & Chenhall, R. D. (2008) 'Walkin' about at night': the background to teenage pregnancy in a remote Aboriginal community, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 11, 269-281.
- Shoveller, J. A., Johnson, J. L., Langille, D. B. & Mitchell, T. (2004) Socio-cultural influences on young people's sexual development, *Social Science and Medicine*, 59, 473-487.

- Spronk, R. (2005) Female sexuality in Nairobi: flawed or favoured?, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 7, 267-277.
- Thianthai, C. (2004) Gender and class differences in young people's sexuality and HIV/AIDS risk-taking behaviours in Thailand, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 6, 189-203.
- Thomson, R. (2000) Dream on: the logic of sexual practice, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 3, 407-427.
- Vincent, L. (2008) 'Boys will be boys': traditional Xhosa male circumcision, HIV and sexual socialisation in contemporary South Africa, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 10, 431-446.
- Youdell, D. (2005) Sex-gender-sexuality: how sex, gender and sexuality constellations are constituted in secondary schools, *Gender and Education*, 17, 249-270.