

ACADEMIC SESSION 2018-2019

HI4007 – SPECIAL SUBJECT
WOMEN AND MEN: COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, AND DIVORCE IN THE
MIDDLE AGES

30 CREDITS: 11 WEEKS

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your [MyAberdeen](#) Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR

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Discipline Administration

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TIMETABLE

For time and place of classes, please see [MyAberdeen](#)

Students can also view their university timetable at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will address a number of themes, including modern studies of marriage; the western medieval church and marriage law, sexuality and gender in the middle ages; attitudes to love, marriage and the family; and sex roles and gender differences. We will examine the way in which gender and ideology influenced the lives of both ordinary and not-so-ordinary people in the middle ages by examining a variety of primary and secondary sources.

NB: The lecture schedule below is subject to change to accommodate student numbers and interests and is for guidance only.

- Week 1:** Registration; Introduction to the course; Themes; Sources and Assessment; Who, When, Where, What? The chronological and biographical framework of our discussion of courtship, law, sex, marriage and the family.
Primary Readings: Selections from the Bible on sex and marriage.
- Week 2:** **Religion**
Primary Readings: St Paul 'Letter to the Corinthians', St Augustine "On the marital Good". St Jerome "Against Jovinian".
- Week 3:** **State and Law**
Primary Readings: Selections from the *Liber Extra* on sex and marriage and R. v. Paynel (*Rolls of Parliament*, 1302).
- Week 4:** **Courtship and Rites**
Primary readings: Stevenson, Kenneth. *Nuptial Blessing: A Study of Christian Marriage Rites*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Week 5:** **GOBBET EXERCISE ONE TO BE HANDED IN**
The Ties that Bind (political alliances and social networks)
Primary readings: D.L. d'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage, 860–1600*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Week 6:** **The Family Economy** (e.g., property, production, reproduction, etc.). "The European Marriage Pattern" and its implications; Georges Duby and Medieval Marriage.

Primary Readings: Richard M. Smith, "Geographical Diversity in the Resort to Marriage in Late Medieval Europe: Work, Reputation, and Unmarried Females in the Household Formation Systems of Northern and Southern Europe." In *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society 1200–1500*, edited by P.J.P. Goldberg, 16–65. Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1992. AND Georges Duby, *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Twelfth-Century France*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

Week 7: Love, Sex, and Sexuality (within and outside of marriage)
Primary Readings: The Canterbury Tales: General Prologue and Wife of Bath's prologue.

Week 8: Breaking Vows
Primary Readings: Frederik Pedersen, "Romeo and Juliet of Stonegate": *A Medieval Marriage in Crisis*. Borthwick Paper, no. 87. York: Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, University of York, 1995.

Week 9: GOBBET EXERCISE TWO TO BE HANDED IN
Representations of Marriage (political, artistic, intellectual, etc.)
Primary readings: D. L. d'Avray, *Medieval Marriage Sermons Mass Communication in a Culture without Print*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Week 10: Breaking Vows: How to end a marriage in the middle ages
Primary reading: Sara M. Butler, *Divorce in Medieval England : From One to Two Persons in Law*. Routledge Research in Medieval Studies, vol. 4. New York, NY: Routledge, 2013.

Week 11: Recapitulation and Exam Preparation

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aims and learning outcomes of this course are:

- to introduce students to the concepts of 'love', 'gender' and 'family' as historical constructs with complex, time-specific terminology;
- to provide students with a general knowledge of social attitudes to these concepts in the period;
- to allow students to evaluate the interplay of socio-economic levels of society, changing religious mores, and developments in law, literature, theology and philosophy as these relate to views on sexuality in its medieval context.

This course also aims to develop other, more general kinds of transferable skills that will help in understanding that some views and attitudes on sexuality and family structure are specific to certain times and places.

In particular students will be expected:

- to participate in group work;

- to speak to a group and lead a general discussion;
- to prepare presentations and construct an argument to a deadline with limits on length of presentation;
- to analyse the impact of social, cultural, economic, and religious realities on attitudes to love, sexuality, and family and the internal organisation of the family;
- to reflect on the complex relations between causes and effects;
- to discriminate between characteristics seemingly central to the human condition and those specifically delineated by locale and time.

Lectures, seminars, and presentations are aimed at prompting such reflections.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME

- Though Dr Pedersen will introduce the topic in the first week of term, teaching will consist of a mixture of informal lectures (during which you are welcome to interrupt and ask questions) and seminars preceded by individual or group presentations by students. Seminars will be introduced by a presentation by a member of the class based on a reading of a collection of sources and/or a study of central importance to the topic under discussion. This will be followed by a discussion based on the broader reading assigned for the class on a selection of primary sources. Each student will be required to present a seminar.
- **Presentations.** Students are responsible for a 20-minute presentation and for leading the discussion of their topic and readings set for the seminar presentation. Students are encouraged to discuss their presentation, in advance with Dr Pedersen. Students may choose to lecture, assign discussion questions, and/or organise group work – indeed, **any method** of ‘presenting’ which suits their needs, interests, or abilities.
- **Further reading.** This is an essential part of any course in History and will deepen your understanding and enjoyment of the period and the discipline of history. A select bibliography will be provided to give points of departure for further reading on the topics covered in the course. The footnotes and bibliographies of these books and articles are two sources of further reading; the search-features of the library catalogue, browsing the open shelves, and consulting the course co-ordinator are other ways forward. A major outcome of a university education should be an ability to find information on any topic within your field. You are encouraged to show initiative in developing this ability.

ASSESSMENT

3 hour Exam (100%)

Formative evaluation takes the form of two short gobbet exercises of no more than 1000 words each which are intended to prepare you for the course exam. They are therefore in the same format as the gobbet questions on the exam.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to **MyAberdeen – Organisations - Divinity, History & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates**. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

Gobbet Exercise 1 = due Wednesday of Week 5 (**10 October**), 3pm

Gobbet Exercise 2 = due Wednesday of Week 9 (**7 November**), 3pm

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Submit **one paper copy** with a completed essay cover sheet to the **drop boxes in CB008 in 50-52 College Bounds** and **one official electronic copy** to **TurnitinUK via MyAberdeen**. Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date.

Paper Copy: One paper copy, typed and double spaced, together with an **Assessment cover sheet** – this should have your ID number **clearly** written on the cover sheet, with **NO** name or signature but **EVERYTHING ELSE** completed, including tutor's name – and should be delivered to the drop boxes in CB008, 50-52 College Bounds.

Electronic Copy: One copy submitted through Turnitin via [MyAberdeen](#). (for instructions please see <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/>) Students are asked to retain the Turnitin receipt so they are able to provide proof of submission at a later date if required.

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 HI4007 Essay 1.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. HI4007 Essay 1.

Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date.

Please note: Failure to submit both an electronic copy to TurnitinUK, and an identical paper copy, will result in a deduction of marks.

Failure to submit to TurnitinUK will result in a zero mark.

EXAMINATION

In the exam you are expected to answer three questions:

Question 1, which is compulsory, asks you to comment on three short extracts from primary sources (from a choice of eight).

You are also expected to answer two further questions in essay form.

Question 1 represents 40% of the total marks: the other two questions represent 30% each.

Past exam papers can be viewed at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/>.