



# SOCX315

## Love, Sex and Friendship

S1 OUA 2017

*Dept of Sociology*

### Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	7
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	9

#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Tutor

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Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Our relations with intimate others are governed by a quite distinctive set of norms. We do not normally think it is appropriate to adopt the strategic attitude of the actor in commercial settings, nor do we adopt the impartial disinterest of the actor in public life. How did the intimate sphere become carved out as a specific domain in modern social life and what has been said about the distinctiveness of its governing expectations? This unit examines a range of accounts of special love, friendship and familial relations. In addition, what are the present realities that confront these relations? It is anticipated that students will obtain a broad knowledge of classical and contemporary literature in the sociology of intimacy. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see [www.open.edu.au](http://www.open.edu.au)

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.

The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.

The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.

An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other

differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.

Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.

The ability to conduct independent research.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Participation</a>	20%	No	Ongoing
<a href="#">Essay 1</a>	20%	No	Week 5 (Wed, 5pm EST)
<a href="#">Essay 2</a>	20%	No	Week 9 (Wed 5pm, EST)
<a href="#">Essay 3</a>	40%	No	Week 13 (Wed 5pm, EST)

### Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Each week you will be asked to investigate a variety of readings accompanied by commentaries or sets of questions to guide you through the readings. These weekly questions are designed to guide you through the ideas and concepts that we will be exploring in the course. You will be asked to investigate these key questions, and post your findings to the discussion forums.

Active engagement in discussions is an important part of university learning. Ensure you have read at least the required readings prior to discussions. Your tutor will give you additional instructions on how to participate in the discussion forums. Note that quality participation in less than 80% of weekly discussions will incur a 'fail' for the course unless exceptional circumstances prevail.

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### Essay 1

Due: **Week 5 (Wed, 5pm EST)**

Weighting: **20%**

**Length:** 800 words.

**Task:** Choose and critically review one of the set readings available on e-Reserve and discussed in **weeks 2 to 4**.

The exercise is designed to assess your ability to *interpret* the materials as well as your capacity to *critically evaluate* the significance of the chosen piece.

What, in your view, is the main issue(s) that the author wishes to raise? Why does the author take these as being so important? What are the values and the assumptions that are informing the article or chapter? Are its intentions adequately carried through? What do *you* think about those intentions? Does the reading have anything important to say to us today? Attempt to respond only to so many of these kinds of questions as you judge necessary to display your grasp of the main themes and issues thrown up by the chosen reading.

As you write the review, remember that having an opinion is a necessary but not sufficient condition to having an argument. Don't simply offer your views. Argue them through, establishing the grounds upon which your assessment might be taken to be a plausible and persuasive interpretation of the issue at hand.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.

## Essay 2

Due: **Week 9 (Wed 5pm, EST)**

Weighting: **20%**

**Length:** 800 words.

**Task:** Choose and critically review one of the set readings available on e-Reserve and discussed in **weeks 5 to 8**.

The exercise is designed to assess your ability to *interpret* the materials as well as your capacity to *critically evaluate* the significance of the chosen piece.

What, in your view, is the main issue(s) that the author wishes to raise? Why does the author take these as being so important? What are the values and the assumptions that are informing the article or chapter? Are its intentions adequately carried through? What do *you* think about those intentions? Does the reading have anything important to say to us today? Attempt to respond only to so many of these kinds of questions as you judge necessary to display your

grasp of the main themes and issues thrown up by the chosen reading.

As you write the review, remember that having an opinion is a necessary but not sufficient condition to having an argument. Don't simply offer your views. Argue them through, establishing the grounds upon which your assessment might be taken to be a plausible and persuasive interpretation of the issue at hand.

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## Essay 3

Due: **Week 13 (Wed 5pm, EST)**

Weighting: **40%**

**Length:** 2000 words.

**Task:** Choose one of the questions below:

### Questions

1. When we think about the intimate sphere it is tempting to perceive it as a self-sufficient, self-referential capsule divorced from the social realm. However, sociological analysis shows that this is not the case. How would you describe the relationship between the public sphere and the intimate sphere? As your examples, choose either love, friendship or family.
2. Love can be a powerful emotion between romantically attached individuals. Yet, it is an emotion that is framed by the norms and values of our culture. Discuss.
3. Discuss the relationship between romantic love and consumer culture.
4. Referring to delayed marriage and family formation, social commentators and journalists often draw the conclusion that people in their 20s and 30s no longer want to commit to others. Alternative voices are rare. Provide such an alternative argument.
5. Nietzsche said the following about friendship: '[S]uch human relationships almost always depend upon the fact that two or three things are never said or even so much as touched upon: if these little boulders do start to roll, however, friendship follows after them and shatters.' Discuss in relation to the bond between 'best friends'.
6. Markus states that 'the principle of autonomy or self-determination, as one of the main characteristics of friendship, could contribute to ... the radicalisation of democratic

arrangements in the systemic structure.' Discuss.

7. Commentators have argued that our culture at once protects child innocence and objectifies children in the name of profit-making. We have already discussed child beauty pageants. Research and discuss *another* example.
8. The seemingly most natural interactions among intimates have increasingly become subject to expert advice. Focussing on either love or relationships between parents and children (a) discuss examples of this phenomenon, and (b) analyse why this type of advice has come about, and what needs it serves.
9. Conservative politicians often celebrate the family as the core of society which needs to be protected at all costs. At the same time, this political agenda advocates for policies that put enormous strains on the family. Discuss with reference to **one** policy area (e.g. education, child care, maternity leave, work, etc.)
10. Domestic violence and abuse are constant companions of intimate relationships. Research and discuss this issue through a sociological lens with a focus on one of the following areas: same-sex relationships, elder abuse, Indigenous communities, ethnicity.

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- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.
- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

## Delivery and Resources

Each week you will be required to undertake a series of learning steps. These include reading the lectures, doing the allocated readings, and participating in online tutorial discussions. It is a requirement of this unit that you keep up to date and complete *all* weekly tasks.

There are three ways to keep in contact with staff and other students in this unit:

1. The **Dialogue Module** allows you to communicate with tutor.
2. In the **Announcements / News**, the teaching staff will make unit-wide announcements. These will mostly concern administrative matters. All participants are subscribed to this

forum and will automatically receive email notification of these important announcements.

3. Check the **General Discussion Forum** on a regular basis for weekly communications by your tutor. This forum also allows you to post any questions you might have in relation to this unit.

## Policies and Procedures

### Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

### Extension Request

**Special Consideration Policy and Procedure**  
(<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit [Ask MQ](#) and use your OneID to log in

2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

### Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

## OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

### Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to [the census date](#) (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to [apply for Special Circumstances](#). If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can [apply online](#).

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to [apply directly to Macquarie University](#).

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy\\_2016.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html)

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint\\_management/procedure.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.



## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- The ability to conduct independent research.

### **Assessment task**

- Essay 3

## **Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative**

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.

### **Assessment task**

- Essay 3

## **Commitment to Continuous Learning**

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.
- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.
- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.

- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3

## **Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills**

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.
- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.
- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.
- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.
- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.
- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.
- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.

- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3

## **Effective Communication**

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.
- The ability to sociologically analyse historical and contemporary practices of intimacy, with particular attention to concepts of love, romance, sex, sexuality, and friendship.
- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.
- Demonstration of advanced research skills through an ability to source and analyse key arguments and debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Essay 2
- Essay 3

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with

knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- An understanding of key concepts, issues and contemporary debates in the sociology of intimate relationships.
- The ability to sociologically discuss love, sex, and friendship with peers.
- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.
- The ability to conduct independent research.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay 1
- Essay 2

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- An awareness of how gender, class, race, and sexuality differences (among other differences) can intersect and influence different practices and possibilities of intimate relations.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay 3