What is sexuality and what is its power in the current world? What do we desire and why do we desire it? What is the relationship between love and desire, or love and sex? If we wanted to change our sexuality, could we? These questions, and others, are often on the tips of tongues.

This course surveys a variety of methodological and theoretical approaches to these questions. Drawing from literature, anthropology, biology and medicine, sociology, history, and feminist and queer theory, we will investigate the role that sexuality plays in structuring identity, gender and race, everyday life, popular culture, and national and geopolitical controversies. In addition to scholarly readings, students will draw from popular media and their own experiences to explore topics that include: the politics of sexual identities; representations of sexuality in media and film; pornography and erotica; technologies of pleasure; reproductive rights; erotic labor; sexual violence; sexuality, state violence, and mass incarceration; and the geopolitics of sexuality.