

MCFT 569 Sex Therapy (2 units)
FALL 2022, Section 3
Instructor: Bina Bakhtiar, MSW, LSWAA.
Time & Day: Tuesdays 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Location: Virtual Zoom meetings
Contact Information: Bbakhtiar@lclark.edu
Office Hours: by appointment via email



Land Acknowledgment

Lewis and Clark is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Tumwater, and Watalala bands of the Chinook; the Tualatin Kalapuya; and many other indigenous nations of the N'chi-Wana (Columbia) River. The land and water it is situated on, has always been a place of learning for these communities, who, for millennia, have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site. Our conversations, relations of learning and knowledge production not only takes place on this land, it is informed by this land, and is answerable to Indigenous peoples. Participants are encouraged to consider their impact on the land and waters and their relationship to the stewards of the land as we un / learn together.

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the fundamental practice of Sex Therapy. Students will gain competence in assessment of sexual issues in individuals, couples, and other relationship structures, as well as, sexual distresses with a critical analysis as well as integration of common clinical practice and Whole-istic approaches to treatment and healing. This course will explore historically relevant events and trends that created lasting, and at times, detrimental consequences on our sexualities. Together we will examine historical sexual traumas and learn how we as therapist and counselors have the potential to uphold harmful hierarchies and binaries through Euro-centric, ableist, cisheteropatriarchal practices. Using a social justice and care-ethic framework, we will co-create, uplift, and center knowledge and practice orientations that facilitate community cohesion, and collective liberation. The course will include opportunities for self-exploration of existing messages and beliefs around sexuality, experiential learning activities, group discussions, and critical analysis of some of North America's common and most acceptable sexual practices.

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus may be subject to change. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the planned schedule according to how the course progresses and to deal with unexpected circumstances.

I invite you to come to this class with an open heart and genuine curiosity to understand and expand your development as a counseling professional. The success of this course relies on student participation and discussion. Just as with your future clients, I expect you to be **fully present** in class and to contribute regularly to the discussions and activities. **Respect** the experiences of others, **trust** in the process of the group, and **engage** without hesitation. As your instructor, I will try my best to share experiences of my clinical practice to assist in the conceptualization and application of the course work.

Working Agreement:

****For this course, all students are expected to commit to and follow the group working agreements outlined in class on day 1 at the beginning of the course and involve each student to determine for themselves how to participate in various activities during the term.***

A note about the nature of this course: Given the sensitive and challenging nature of the material discussed in class, it is important that we develop an atmosphere of trust and openness in the classroom. The instructor will seek to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other, drawing on the guidelines for a relational approach to social justice. It is critical that each class member show respect for the experiences shared; and experiencing discomfort is also part of the process of consciousness-raising. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let the instructor know if you need support with engaging with texts or your peers. Some students find it helpful to journal their thoughts and feelings as they explore these sensitive issues.

Content warning: "We are a community that commits itself to diversity and sustainability as dimensions of a just society" --Lewis and Clark Mission Statement

We will be discussing and exploring sexuality topics, using a range of languages, images, and representations. If you have specific content warning needs, please share with the professor via email. If you are not comfortable with sexual language, both technical and common usage, and the depiction of genitalia and sexual acts as a part of learning therapy techniques for sexual issues, or with discussing your own attitudes regarding human sexuality, then this may not be the time for you to take this class.

Communication: If you would like to schedule a Zoom individual meeting, then please feel free to email me for an appointment. If you send an email to me, you can expect an answer in about 24 hours during the week. Generally, if you email me during the weekend, it is best to assume that I will not respond until Monday morning.

COVID-19

COVID-19 protocols per Lewis & Clark College, the State of Oregon, City of Portland, and Multnomah County for groups. Please stay informed of any changes, as they might affect both health and the class process. Please listen to your gut, and do what helps you feel as safe as possible.

MCFT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO 1.1 Students recognize the impact of power on individuals, families, and communities

SLO 1.2 Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, social systems in people's lived experience.

SLO 1.3 Students apply systems/relational theories to case conceptualization.

SLO 2.2 Students' clinical practice demonstrates attention to social justice and anti-oppression.

SLO 3.1 Students are able to discern the implications of the sociopolitical context within which research is produced and applied.

SLO 3.2 Students draw on the research literature relevant to family therapy in case planning.

SLO 4.1 Students apply ethical decision-making processes to clinical dilemmas.

Course Objectives

Through active and rigorous participation in this course students will:

1. Understand sexual identity, attraction(s), and behavior(s) relative to social, historical, and cultural influences; including how these contexts serve to privilege some expressions of sexuality while oppressing others.
2. Understand a variety of human sexuality issues (e.g., gender performativity, sexual functioning, and sexual self-worth), human development and sexuality, and the impact of sexuality / sexual issues on family and couple functioning.
3. Develop comfort and preliminary fluency talking about sensuality / sexuality with individuals, partnership(s), groups, and communities.
4. Learn to assess sexual issues from a body-mind-spirit-social perspective, which includes an analysis of power differentials between individuals and in society relative to sexuality.
5. Learn a range of treatment approaches and techniques for resolving sexual concerns and consider their use within specific cultural and social contexts.
6. Consider treatment issues specific to sex therapy within an inclusive framework that reflects the fluidity and complexity of individual and inter-personal sensual / sexual lived experience.
7. Explore each student's own values and biases relative to sexual identity, attraction(s), and behavior(s) that have the potential to nurture through perpetuating harm while engaging future clients.

LEARNING RESOURCES

Required Course Texts and Reading Resources

Principles and Practice of Sex Therapy. (2020). United Kingdom: Guilford Publications.

Weeks, G. R., Gambescia, N., & Hertlein, K. M. (2016). *A Clinician's Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy* (2nd Ed). Routledge Publishers. ISBN: 978-0415738392

Brown Maree, A., (2019). *Pleasure Activism: The politics of feeling good*. AK Press.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Sexual History Intake and Interview: Part 1, 2, 3 - 30 Points

DUE DATE: Class 5; November 8, 2022

There are three parts to this assignment:

- 1) Design your own sexual history/interview to use as a clinical assessment tool, and
- 2) Participate in a full sexual history/interview as both the interviewer and interviewee, and

3) Reflect upon the experience. All three components of the Sexual History Intake and Interview should be submitted.

Partners for this assignment will be determined on the first day of class and will be randomly assigned by the instructor.

Part I: Details on how to design a sexual history/interview will be discussed in class during week two. You are welcome to use some of the templates and examples from class discussion and assigned reading for inspiration. Basically, you are being asked to design a guide that you would use in your own clinical practice for use to collect a sexual history and assess your client's presenting problem. Competency will be given for:

- Organization and thoroughness
- A clear statement of confidentiality
- An indication of the flow of the interview
- An explanation for the reason why you included/excluded components of the intake
- The student's ability to attend to all facets of human sexuality

Examples will be provided in-class prior to the assigned due date.

Part II: The second part of the assignment will be completed with your assigned partner from the class. Each person will take turns being the interviewer and the interviewee. It is recommended that you use your designed sexual history intake guide from Part I of this assignment to complete your interview. Because of the highly personal nature of this assignment, you must decide how much of your own development and experiences you will include or disclose to your colleague. All parts of this interview will be treated as confidential and both members of the team will prepare, review and sign a confidentiality agreement.

Part III: The third part of the assignment is a personal reflection regarding your experience of both sharing your sexual history, as well as hearing your colleague's sexual history during completion of the intake interview. This reflection can be written like a journal (written in first person) but must follow APA guidelines and should be no more than 4 pages, double-spaced including title page. Requirements include: students reflect on their thoughts and feelings, contextualize any internal biases and assumptions, feelings of discomfort or disgust, negative reactions, and/or possible countertransference.

Reflection Paper- 40 Points

DUE DATE: December 13, 2022

Reflect on the questions in Appendix. Write an analysis of no more than 8 page double spaced paper including cover page and references.

The purpose of this assignment is to reflect upon the ideas and experiences related to colonization and sex over the course of this term and identify how you as an individual and professional will integrate the concepts from the course into your personal and professional life. Part of your training as a therapist is to understand your own biases. Use this assignment as an opportunity to explore and express pieces of yourself to clarify the culturally based assumptions and attitudes that you might carry into your personal and professional relationships. Reflection papers should be personal, reveal vulnerabilities, include thoughts around your own assumptions and beliefs, as well as things you found surprising or difficult around your class experience. **The Reflection paper must include 3-5 resources from the class or coursework.**

Dialogue and Engagement - 30 Points

Students' participation in class discussions and activities are essential. We will work collaboratively to create a working agreement during the first class to set expectations for class engagement. All students are expected to participate in the agreement process. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the participation in any particular experiential exercise, please notify the instructor. Class participation includes:

- Review of assigned readings
- Informed discussion of the readings
- Engagement in class experiential activities
- Respectful and constructive feedback on peer oral work
- Completion of assignment listed below

EVALUATION AND GRADING

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| Dialogue and Engagement | 30 |
| Sexual History Intake and Interview 1,2,3 | 40 |
| <u>Reflection Paper</u> | <u>40</u> |
| Total | 100 |

Final Grading

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|--------------|-------------|
| A = 93-100% | A- = 90-92% |
| B + = 88-89% | B = 83-87% |
| B- = 80-82% | C+ = 78-79% |
| C = 73-77% | C- = 70-72% |

According to Graduate School policy, grades lower than B- may not apply to graduation. Students earning a C+ or lower will need to repeat the course.

Late papers and assignments: Any assignments turned in late (without previous permission) will automatically receive a 10% reduction in grade.

Writing Assistance: The Lewis & Clark College Writing Center in the Watzek Library can assist students improve the professional craft of clear communication skills in a range of voice styles.

Disability Services Statement: If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Office of Student Accessibility in Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

This course adheres to the general policies outlined in the catalog and student handbook of the Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. This includes full adherence to the following policies:

- Nondiscrimination: go.lclark.edu/qsec-nondiscrimination
- Standards for professional student conduct and academic integrity: go.lclark.edu/qsec-conduct
- Sexual misconduct: go.lclark.edu/titleIX

If you have any questions regarding these policies, please speak to your instructor for clarification.

| Date | Topic/Agenda | Readings/Requirements |
|---|---|--|
| <p>CLASS ONE</p> <p>10/11</p> <p>1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Attendance • Land Acknowledgement • Agreements • Somatic exercise • Syllabus review | <p>Review Course Syllabus</p> <p>Readings/Resources:</p> <p>None</p> |
| <p>CLASS TWO</p> <p>10/18</p> <p>1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Introduction to Sexual Health and Sex Therapy</p> <p>Understand cultural, systemic/structural oppression and biological underpinnings</p> | <p>Please watch and read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch MMIW video / reading https://www.nativewomenswilderness.org/mmiw • Introduction & Principle / Chapter 1 in Erotically Marginalized • Chapter 1 in Clinician’s Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy • Chapter 3 in Clinician’s Guide to Systemic Sex Therapy • Review Sexual History document |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Glossary in <i>Erotically Marginalized</i> |
| <p>CLASS THREE</p> <p>10/25</p> <p>1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Examine and analyze approaches, theories and various models to sex therapy, etc.</p> | <p>Please read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barker, Meg (2011). Existential sex therapy. <i>Sexual and Relationship Therapy</i>, 26(1), pp. 33–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681991003685879 Principle / Chapter 2 in <i>Erotically Marginalized</i> In <i>Pleasure Activism</i> read Introduction and Uses of the Erotic Introduction & Chapter 11 in <i>Principles & Practices</i> |
| <p>CLASS FOUR</p> <p>11/01</p> <p>1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Examine and analyze alternative/non-conventional approaches to sex therapy practice and treatment such as psychedelics and microdosing, and indigenous knowledges and sciences.</p> <p>Principles of interdisciplinary consultation, collaboration, and referral building.</p> | <p>Please read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principle / Chapter 9 in <i>Erotically Marginalized</i> Section 4 in <i>Pleasure Activism</i> Espinoza, Y. (2014). Sexual healing with Amazonian plant teachers: aeuristic inquiry of women’s spiritual–erotic awakenings. <i>Sexual and Relationship Therapy</i>, 29(1), 109–120. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681994.2013.861060 Goldpaugh, D. D. (2021). Finding the divine within: exploring the role of the sacred in psychedelic integration therapy for sexual trauma and dysfunction. <i>Sexual and Relationship</i> |

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| | | <p><i>Therapy</i>, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681994.2021.1994138</p> |
| <p>CLASS FIVE 11/08 1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Examine and discuss Sex therapy/sexuality counseling and desire phase distress, sexual aversion, sexual development, asexuality, and trauma-related sexual challenges.</p> | <p>Please read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle 4 & 5 in <i>Erotically Marginalized</i> • Principles & Practices Chapter 13 & 17 • Bogaert, A. F. (2015). Asexuality: What It Is and Why It Matters. <i>The Journal of Sex Research</i>, 52(4), 362-379. doi:10.1080/00224499.2015.1015713 • Antonsen, A.N., Zdaniuk, B., Yule, M. et al. (2020) Ace and Aro: Understanding Differences in Romantic Attractions Among Persons Identifying as Asexual. <i>Arch Sex Behav</i> 49, 1615–1630. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-019-01600-1 <p>Assignment Due: Sexual History Intake and Interview: Part 1, 2, 3.</p> |
| <p>CLASS SIX 11/15 1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Examine and analyze various conditions impacting sexual and mental health functioning across sex assigned at birth.</p> | <p>Please read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles & Practices Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7 |
| <p>CLASS SEVEN 11/22 1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Examine and analyze various conditions impacting sexual and mental health functioning across sex assigned at birth.</p> | <p>Please read the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles & Practices Chapters 1, 2, 5, 8, 9 |
| <p>CLASS EIGHT 11/29 1:00pm - 4:00pm</p> | <p>Theorize and apply various conditions impacting sexual and mental health functioning across gender expansive experiences, disability, and collective accessibility that</p> | <p>Please read and watch the following before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberating All Bodies: Disability Justice & Intersex Liberation in Conversation: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=780461175846665 |

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| | draws upon various lineages of anti-oppressive epistemic knowledges and practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles & Practices Chapters 19, 18* Review the Standards of Care 8 from WPATH https://www.wpath.org. |
| CLASS NINE 12/06 1:00pm - 4:00pm | Assess and discuss ethics, professionalism, boundaries as sex therapists, cultivation of culturally safe containers, and appropriate care in therapeutic spaces. | Please read the following before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AASECT Code of Ethics (reread) AASECT No Touch Policy What is Sex Positivity by Laureano https://prismreports.org/2020/09/24/what-is-sex-positivity/ Principles & Practices Chapters 22 |
| CLASS TEN 12/13 1:00pm - 4:00pm | Discuss love as a state of being and knowing as it relates to sexuality, intimacy, pleasure and our collective liberation. | Please read the following before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bell hooks All About Love (Optional) Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277992187_Decolonization_Is_Not_a_Metaphor Principles & Practices Chapters 14, 23 Erotically Marginalized Chapter 9 <p>Assignment Due: Reflection Paper</p> |

Recommended Readings:

Brotto, L. A. (2018). Better sex through mindfulness: How women can cultivate desire. Canada: Greystone books.

Constantinides, D., Sennott, S., & Chandler, D. (2019). Sex Therapy with Erotically Marginalized Clients: Nine Principles of Clinical Support (1st ed.). Routledge.

Chu, E. (2020). Identity Positivity in Decolonial Worlds: Making Room for Gender and Sexual Possibility. LUC Dissertation.

Cleis Press Makai, M. (2013). Domination & Submission: The BDSM Relationship Handbook. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Dana, Deb. (2018). The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy: Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation. New York, NY: WW Norton and Company.

- Donaghue, C. (2015). *Sex outside the lines*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books Inc.
- Diamond, L. M. (2003). What does sexual orientation orient? A biobehavioral model distinguishing romantic love and sexual desire. *Psychological Review*, 110(1), 173-192. doi:10.1037/0033-295x.110.1.173
- Easton, D., & Hardy, J. W. (2011). *The New Bottoming Book*. (2nd Ed). Gardena, CA: Greenery Press.
- Emens EF. (2014) Compulsory sexuality. *Stanford Law Rev.* 2014 Feb;66(2):303-86. PMID: 2465429
- Fadiman, J. (2011). *The Psychedelic Explorer's Guide: Safe, Therapeutic, and Sacred Journeys* (Illustrated ed.). Park Street Press.
- Flore, J. (2013) HSDD and asexuality: a question of instruments, *Psychology & Sexuality*, 4:2, 152-166, DOI: 10.1080/19419899.2013.774163
- Haines, S. (2008). *Healing Sex: A Mind-Body Approach to Healing Sexual Trauma*. Cleis Press; (2nd Ed).
- Hardy, J. W., & Easton, D. (2011) *The Ethical Slut*. (3rd Ed). Ten Speed Press.
- Harris, S. (2018) *Tongue Tied: Untangling Communication in Sex, Kink, and Relationships*. Cleis Press.
- Hawkins Owen, I. (2014). On the Racialization of Asexuality. In K. J. Cerankowski, & M. Milks, *Asexualities: Feminist and Queer Perspectives* (pp. 119-135). New York: Routledge.
- Hertlein, K. M., Gambescia, N., & Weeks, G. R. (2020). *Systemic Sex Therapy* (3rd Ed.). Routledge publishing.
- Herman, Judith. (2015). *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence--from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Joannides, P. (2015). *Guide to Getting It On*. Goofy Foot Press.
- Kaufman, M., Silverberg, C., & Odette, F. (2007). *The Ultimate Guide to Sex and Disability*. (2nd Ed).
- Malone, Reece M.; Stewart, Marla Renee; Gary-Smith, Mariotta; & Wadley James C. (2021) "An Intersectional Approach to Sex Therapy: Centering the Lives of Indigenous, Racialized, and People of Color"; Routledge; ISBN: 978-0367471958
- Menakem, R. (2017) *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press.
- Perel, E. (2018). *The State of Affairs: Rethinking Infidelity* (Reprint ed.). Harper Paperbacks.
- Ph.D., N. E. (2021). *Come As You Are: Revised and Updated: The Surprising New Science That Will Transform Your Sex Life* (Revised, Updated ed.). Simon & Schuster.
- Pollan, M. (2019). *How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence* (Reprint ed.). Penguin Books.

Renee, S. (2018). *The body is not an apology: The power of radical self-love*. Berrett Koehler Publishers.

Taormino, T. (2008). *Opening Up: A Guide to Creating and Sustaining Open Relationships*. Cleis Press Taylor.

Tedlock, B. (2005). *The Woman in the Shaman's Body: Reclaiming the Feminine in Religion and Medicine* (Reprint ed.). Bantam.

Winger, C. (2020). *Listening to Ecstasy: The Transformative Power of MDMA*. Park Street Press.

Course Evaluation:

You will be asked to provide constructive critique and evaluation of this course and faculty. This will be anonymous, and will not have any impact upon your grading. Your participation in this evaluation survey is an integral part of this course, the future development of teaching methods, pedagogy, and faculty's professional development. I strongly encourage you to participate in this anonymous course evaluation. It is optional.

Appendix:

Please note, you will not be turning in the answers to the following questions, instead to complete the assignment, review the questions below about the course content and write a reflection about your overall experience. You may select specific questions or sections to discuss or offer a more general overview of specific areas.

The Course

What core values or beliefs have been challenged with this course?

What paradigm shifts have you noticed?

Has cognitive dissonance come up?

About you

Your understanding of Sexuality

How has white supremacy influenced your views on sexuality?

Sexual Messages and Beliefs

What messaging did you mistake for truth?

What was something you took for truth that has not been empowering?

American History

Did you learn anything new about history?

What are sexualized racial stereotypes you have seen in historic times or present day of BIPOC? What about white people?

Sexual History

Relational

How has your feminism neglected or minimized BIPOC

How has your feminism rejected, discounted or ignored BIPOC leaders

How has your feminism been white-centered?

If you are someone who has called yourself an intersectional feminist, in what ways have you been centering BIWOC?

Adverse Sexual Experiences

Have you heard your family speak racialized sexual stereotypes?

What racist beliefs have you internalized from your race, family, culture ect.?

Medical History

Have you ever felt safe or unsafe in a clinical setting due to your ethnicity/race, gender, sexual orientation, partner choices?

Psychological History

What messages did you receive from your family about your gender?

As a child, did you find representations of your race in the media?

In what ways have you seen centering white sexuality in print and film?

As a child, did you find representations of your sexual orientation?

What messages were you taught about gender?

What messages were you taught about sexual orientation?

What messages were you taught about monogamy?

How has our culture superhumanized portions of the identities of BIPOC while dehumanizing other parts?

Personal Issues

What are sexualized racist stereotypes, beliefs, and thoughts you hold about people from different racial groups?

How do you think your sexual schemas were influenced by the effects of colonization?

What have you begun to understand about your personal experiences with sexuality in relation to white supremacy?

Have you fetishized people from another race?

How is your world view a white centered one?

What are some ways you can begin to have deeper conversations with your community around ethnosexuality?

Hair & Body

Did you ever feel you were more or less attractive due to the color of your skin?

Did you ever feel you were more or less attractive due to the texture or color of your hair?

Did you ever feel you were more or less attractive due to the size or shape of your body?

Have you ever felt more or less attractive due to the size, shape, or color of your genitalia?

Professional

How does white privilege show up in your professional field?

What are some ways you can begin to have deeper conversations with your community around ethnosexuality?

Decolonization

In what ways have you stayed silent or complicit to sexualized stereotypes?

How do you benefit from silence?

What types of situations or topics elicit the most silence from you?

How has your silence been complicit in upholding racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ect. behavior?

What are sexual stereotypes you have thought or negative assumptions you have made about BIPOC or white folk?

In what ways have your values helped your ability to practice decolonization of sexuality?

What contradictory values do you hold that hinder your ability to practice decolonizing sexuality?

What core values or beliefs do you feel you need to integrate in or to start or continue anti-racist decolonization of sexuality?

In what ways has settler sexuality influenced your sexuality?