“God in my Underwear” Roger Friedland 1.29.09

Sexual components of Religion/the relationship between erotic love and God:

Judaism – Relationship to god can be viewed sexually, as a jealous lover, husband. Christianity - Jesus’ direct teachings did not place sexual restrictions on followers. St. Augustine creates concept of sexuality & lust as punishment for original sin. Pope Benedict XVI makes first pronouncement about erotic love: what is the relationship between erotic love and love of god. Benedict XVI wants to put erotic love in the service of God. God is a lover with all the true passions of love.

What is the relationship between erotic love and god?

Initial Survey on Facebook: when was the last time you got laid, prayed, said I love you.

Results from pilot survey:

800 sex acts
20% of students are still virgins.
¾ intercourse
1/3 oral
20% sometimes anal
1/3rd were first time erotic encounters with partner.
2/3rds of acts were sober (same for men and women)
50% of sex acts were people who were not in love
1/3 had never been in love
1/3 not looking for a relationship
½ said it was easy or didn’t matter if sex had emotional content
¼ of 20 year olds have had 8 or more partners
10% have had 15 or more.
30% men are first time with partner, 25% of women first time.
50% of people expect to spend their life with one person

- An erotic culture has emerged that is for “fun” as opposed to emotional/romantic attachment
- Women are expected to render sex without conditions.
- Hooking up is use of flesh, not connection of people.
- Young women tend to equate love with weakness. “It means that you’re just like your grandmother used to be”
- Social pressures come from multiple sources. A) Some parents advise their children to play field. B) Women advise each other to play the field “chicks before dicks.”

Shifts in Feminism

3rd Wave Feminism replaces 2nd wave Feminism which tried to erase gender distinctions. 3rd wave feminism embraces “femininity” while taking on some acceptances of power relations between men and women.

Women “chemically fueled” for love.

Young women 3x more likely than men to find it more difficult to separate feelings from sex (27% of women, 9% of men).

Asymmetry in sex and feelings is damaging to young women.
In first time hookup boys ejaculate 40% of the time, women ejaculate 14% of the time.
70% of women who love the person the last person they had sex with had an orgasm. 30% who didn’t love him did. For men this variation.

Pressure to not show emotional vulnerability because it might scare men away.

**After sex:**
Young women’s desire for emotional attachment rises. ¼ of women survey hope relationships will happen. Less than half of men want a relationship. ¼ don’t want to hook up again. Women who say sex with attachment is easy are most likely to be drunk while having sex.

Holding hands in public: declaring off the sexual market, taking private matters public, risk of public rejection.

**RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD:** Belief in god strongly associated with inability to separate god and love. For men, if you don’t believe in god it’s easier to have sex without feelings. Magnitude is much higher for women. Women who believe in god find it much harder to disconnect.

Students use religious language to talk about love. Increasing #s of young people doubt existence of love.

Relationship between sex and love as it intersects through god. Religion is a frame through which we understand love. God is a lover because we have been able to be lovers.

Romantic love is a cultural phenomenon. It makes certain forms of action possible; it scripts a particular type of being and a way of being. It doesn’t just value love; it constitutes love as a value. Romantic love is an institution.

**Three erotic cultures among young Americans**, each with its own ontological construction of sexuality.

1. Pleasurable good (hooking up)
2. Romantic love (expression of exclusive love)
3. Sacrament/sin (religious interpretation of god’s love).

These three cultures love differently.

**Production/Action**
Production: goal exterior to your act that you’re trying to realize.
Praxis (action): Not production, performance. Standards are internal to action.

**Institutions and Actors**
Institutions posses actors as much as actors posses them (duality). External places that are internal to us. We are their incarnation.

Commonalities between the functioning of institutions and religions:

1) Faith
2) Ritual
3) Belief
4) Transcendence