Sociology 340 · Ethics 280

Taboo Markets

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What this Course is About

This course is about taboo, stigmatized, or otherwise morally controversial markets. Examples include trade in alcohol and other drugs, baby-selling, paid domestic labor, care work, sex, human blood, organs, and tissue, eggs, sperm, genetic material, viatical contracts, and pollution rights. We will read empirical studies and ethical arguments about these markets, focusing mostly on how exchange in these goods is practically accomplished and morally justified in theory and practice. We will also consider broader questions about the scope and limits, if any, of the market as a social institution, and its relationship to other sorts of transfers, especially gift exchange.

Readings

Readings will be made available on Sakai and may change from those listed below. I recommend you purchase two books:

**Contact Information**

Drop-in office hours are Tuesdays from 9:30–10:30am. My office is 255 Sociology/Psychology, on West Campus. To schedule an appointment or contact me about other class-related matters, email me at kjhealy@soc.duke.edu. The TA for the course is Lauren Valentino. She can be reached at lauren.valentino@duke.edu.

**Requirements**

You are required to attend and participate in class. There will be an in-class exam, one paper, and a group project you will present in class.

1. **Attendance and Participation.** Do the reading, show up to class, silence your phone. Be prepared to discuss the material and ask questions on the presentations. Participation will count for 15% of your final grade.

2. **In-Class Midterm Exam.** This will be worth 25% of your final grade.

3. **Group Presentation.** Worth 25% of your final grade. We will discuss group topics, time slots, and other details in class. Attendance and participation during group presentations (not just your own) is required.

4. **Final Paper.** Due at the end of the semester (date TBD), worth 35% of your final grade.

**Course Schedule**

Assigned readings may change, so pay attention.

**Week 1**  **Introduction**

**Week 2**  **Market Society**


**Week 3**  **Civilizing Markets**

Week 4 **Destructive Markets**

Week 5 **Crowding and Nudging**

Week 6 **Forbidden Exchanges**

Week 7 **Blood and Organs**

Week 8 **Eggs and Sperm** Rene Almeling, *Sex Cells*.

Week 9 **Review (March 2nd) and Midterm Exam (March 4th)**

Week 10 **Spring Break: No Class**

Week 11 **Care and Intimacy**

Week 12 **Lives and Nature**

Week 13 **In-Class Presentations.**

Week 14 **In-Class Presentations.**

Week 15 **In-Class Presentations.**
Duke Community Standard

Like all classes at the university, this course is conducted under the Duke Community Standard. Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity. To uphold the Duke Community Standard you will not lie, cheat, or steal in academic endeavors; you will conduct yourself honorably in all your endeavors; and you will act if the Standard is compromised.