

EWP6220

INTEGRATING SEX & SPIRIT: AN EMBODIED INQUIRY

Fall 2014 (3 units)

Wed Sep 3 (11:45am-2:45pm), Oct 11-12, 25-26, & Nov 8-9 (10am-5:00pm)

Instructors: Marina T. Romero & Samuel A. Malkemus

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Course Description:

While sexuality is fundamental in bringing us a sense of embodied vitality and organic growth, spirituality plays a central role in fostering our evolution from a sacred awareness of life's mystery. In the spirit of embodied inquiry, we will explore the importance of bringing together sex and spirit in order to foster the unfolding of our deepest potentials in our daily lives. The course includes "interactive embodied meditations," which involve structured and respectful physical contact among participants. Through these meditations, we will explore the personal aspects that shape us in either connecting to, or separating from, our sexuality and spirituality, as well as open a path of self-reflection aimed at their integration. The course consists of an informational gathering and three intensive weekend retreats.

IMPORTANT! Please read mindfully:

- 1) This work involves self-regulated and respectful (non-sexual) physical contact, as well as interaction with the other classmates at different levels (somatic, emotional, mental, etc.). Any kind of physical contact or interpersonal interaction can potentially mobilize and bring up raw memories and experiences. Please, note that we are in an academic setting, *not* a therapeutic one. In this class you have to be able to breathe and integrate your own experience and still follow the academic process. Please, if you have any doubts in this regard contact the instructors before signing up for the class.
- 2) Attendance to the first class meeting is mandatory.

Summary of Educational Purpose:

The main purpose of this course is to facilitate an embodied understanding of how sexuality and spirituality can be interwoven to encourage an integral and embodied unfolding of our deepest potentials on personal, relational, and social planes. A second objective is to provide a safe space where a deep experiential inquiry into the integration of sexuality and spirituality can take place.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students will be able to:

1. Be more familiar with the reality of their own sexual and spiritual dispositions.
2. Identify personal pathways towards the integration of sexuality and spirituality in their lives.
3. Construct knowledge from experience, both individually and collaboratively.
4. Recognize the value of incorporating personal experience in the study of both sexuality and spirituality.

Statement of Diversity:

In keeping with the integral standards of CIIS this course is committed to honoring classroom diversity. It welcomes both “inner” and “outer” diversity. Through inner diversity we welcome different experiential dimensions (body, heart, vital, mind, etc.) to be a part of the inquiry. Through outer diversity we invite the different backgrounds (social, cultural, sexual, religious, etc.) of each student to participate.

Learning Activities:

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|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Cognitive/Didactic (lecture): | 25% |
| 2. Practical/Applied (dialogue): | 25% |
| 3. Experiential: | 50% |

Criteria for Evaluation:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Class presence and participation: | 60% |
| 2. Papers: | 40% |

Prerequisites:

Openness to experiential ways of knowing (somatic, vital, emotional, imaginal, visionary, etc.) will be assumed.

Grading Options:

Pass / Fail.

Level of Instruction:

MA and Ph.D.

Cap:

18 participants.

Schedule of Classes:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Wednesday, Sep 3: | 11:45am-2:45 pm |
| Saturday-Sunday, Oct 11-12: | 10am-5:00pm |
| Saturday-Sunday, Oct 25-26: | 10am-5:00pm |
| Saturday-Sunday, Nov 8-9: | 10am-5:00pm |

Location:

First Meeting: Mission 607, CIIS Main Building

Weekends: Rainbow Heart Studio: 1450 Cornell Ave, Berkeley, CA 94702

See www.rainbowheartstudio.com for more info and directions

Required Readings:

(Handouts provided in class)

- Cousens, G. (2013). Eros and intimacy. In, G. GERALYN, (Ed.). *The marriage of sex and spirit* (15-27). Santa Rosa, CA: Elite Books
- Ferrer, J. N. (2006). Embodied Spirituality, Now and Then. *Tikkun: Culture, Spirituality, Politics*, 41-45, 53-64.
- Feuerstein, G. (1993). Toward an erotic spirituality for today. In, *Sacred sexuality: Living the vision of the erotic spirit* (pp. 201-213). Los Angeles, CA: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Perigree.
- Irigaray, L. (2002). The way of breath. In, *Between east and west: From singularity to community* (S. Pluhacek, Trans.) (pp. 73-91). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. (Original work published 1999)
- Lee, V. (1996). Spirituality and sexuality do go together. In, *Soulful sex: Opening your heart, body and spirit to lifelong passion*. Berkeley, CA: Conari Press.
- Malkemus, S. A. & Romero, M. T. (2012). Sexuality as a Transformational Path: Exploring the Holistic Dimensions of Human Vitality, *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 31(3), 112-118.
- Romero, M. T. & Albareda, R. V. (2001). Born on Earth: Sexuality, Spirituality, and Human Evolution. *ReVision* 24(2), 5-14.

Suggested Readings:

- Anand, M. (1989). *The art of sexual ecstasy: The path of sacred sexuality for western lovers*. New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Albareda, R. V. & Romero, M. T. (1991). *Nacidos de la tierra: Sexualidad, origen del ser humano*. Barcelona, Spain: Hogar del Libro.
- Albareda, R. V. & Romero M. T. (1999). Sexualidad transpersonal y trascendente. In M. Almendro (Ed.), *La consciencia transpersonal* (pp. 218-242) Barcelona, Spain: Kairós.
- Albareda, R. V., Ferrer, J. N. & Romero, M. T. (2004). Embodied Participation in the Mystery. In J. Drew & D. Lorimer (Eds.), *Ways through the Wall: Transpersonal Approaches to the World Today* (pp. 179-193). Lidney, England: Corpus Publishing.
- Carr, D. M. (2003). *The erotic word: Sexuality, spirituality, and the bible*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Douglas, N. (1997). *Spiritual sex: Secrets of Tantra from the ice age to the new millennium*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.
- Ferrer, J. N. (2003). Integral Transformative Practice: A Participatory Perspective. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 35(1), 21-42.

- Ferrer, J. N. (2006). *Spirituality and Intimate Relationships: Monogamy, Polyamory, and Beyond. Tikkun: Culture, Spirituality, Politics.*
- Feuerstein, G. (2003). *Sacred sexuality: The erotic spirit in the world's great religions.* Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions.
- Foucault, M. (1990). *The history of sexuality: An introduction, Vol. 1* (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York, NY: Random House. (Original work published 1976)
- Fuller, R. C. (2008). *Spirituality in the flesh: Bodily sources of religious experience.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Geralyn, G. (Ed.). (2006). *The marriage of sex and spirit.* Santa Rosa, CA: Elite Books
- Giles, J. (2004). *The nature of sexual desire.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing.
- Gilmore, L. (1998). The whore and the holy one: Contemporary sacred prostitution and transformative consciousness. *Anthropology of Consciousness*, 9(4), 1-14.
- Gupta, B. (Ed.). (1987). *Sexual archetypes, east and west.* New York, NY: Paragon House.
- Haines, S. (2007). *Healing sex: A mind-body approach to healing sexual trauma.* San Francisco, CA: Cleis Press.
- Halligan, F. & Shea, J. (Eds.). (1992). *The fires of desire: Erotic energies and the spiritual quest.* New York, NY: Crossroads.
- Irwin, A. C. (1991). *Eros toward the world: Paul Tillich and the theology of the erotic.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.
- Mann, A. T. & Lyle, J. (1995). *Sacred sexuality.* Rockport, MA: Element Books, Inc.
- Meuth, E. & Weaver, F. Z. (2013). *Sexual enlightenment: How to create lasting fulfillment in life, love, and intimacy.* Bloomington, IN: Balboa Press.
- Moore, T. (1990). *Dark eros: The imagination of sadism.* Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications.
- Nelson, J. B. (1983). *Between two gardens: Reflections on sexuality and religious experience.* Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press.
- Nelson, J. B. (1988). *The intimate connection: Male sexuality, masculine spirituality.* Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press.
- Monnick, E. (1987). *Phallos: Sacred image of the masculine.* Toronto, Canada: Inner City Books.
- Osho (2002). *Sex matters: From sex to superconsciousness.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Stoller, R. J. (1985). *Observing the erotic imagination.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Tannahill, R. (1980). *Sex in history.* New York, NY: Stein and Day Publishers.
- Wade, J. (2004). *Transcendent sex: When lovemaking opens the veil.* New York, NY: Paraview.
- Weeks, J. (1986). *Sexuality.* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Woodman, M., & Dickson, E. (1996). *Dancing in the flames: The dark goddess in the transformation of consciousness.* Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Versluis, A. (2008). *The secret history of Western sexual mysticism: Sacred practices and spiritual marriage.* Rochester, VT: Destiny Books.

Assignments:

1. Written Reflections:

Students will hand two written reflections of approximately 2-3 in length. See the course schedule for more details.

2. Presentation:

Students will prepare a 20-minute presentation based upon a specific inquiry question that emerges from the class process. During the second weekend of our course you will be guided in a process to find a focus for the presentation as well as to find potential student collaborators for a group presentation. You will then have two weeks to prepare your presentation for November 8th. Creative presentations are encouraged that involve theatre, movement, and artistic expression. More guidance will be given in class.

3. Final Paper:

Interweave your personal experience and inspirations from class with reflections on bridging sexuality and spirituality in light of class readings, written assignments, dialogues, and/or the fruits of your own embodied inquiry. What has been their relationship in your experience? Has this course led to any novel understandings or realizations about their relationship? Do these novel understandings contrast with your previous experience? What does the dance of sex and spirit mean to you?

The use of images is encouraged yet not mandatory.

If you decide to use images you may use drawings made at class or other drawings or images, as far as they relate to the class material and convey your personal experience.

Further guidance and suggestions will be offered on the last day of class.

8-10 pages / Due no later than November 24th
(Double-spaced, twelve point font)

Mail a hard copy of your paper, postmarked by November 24th, to:
1450 Cornell Ave, Berkeley, CA 94702

Include a self-addressed envelope with paid postage for the return of your paper

4. Journal:

Participants are asked to keep a personal journal. The journal is intended to facilitate deeper personal reflection and will *not* be collected in class, although it is highly recommended and can be used to support your paper.

Course Schedule

EWP6220 Integrating Sex & Spirit: An Embodied inquiry

The following course structure may be modified according to the concrete reality and evolution of the group and of each participant.

Informational Meeting (Sep 3)

- Introduction to the course and general orientation.
- Experiential Practice: Unconditional acceptance as the foundation of embodied inquiry.
- Participants' introductions.

Weekend Retreat I: Exploring Sex and Spirit (Oct 11 & Oct 12)

- Introduction to the day and opening practice.
- Interactive Embodied Meditations: Accessing our vital world and sexual life force. Accessing our spiritual truth and the energy of consciousness.
- Integrative work: Silence and contemplation. Aesthetic/verbal elaboration of the experience. Circle of sharing.
- Sex & Spirit: Their manifestation in our personal life and its context (personal, cultural, and historical); lights and shadows. Specific inquiry on each.
- Closure of the retreat.

Readings (to be handed out at the end of Sunday):

- Irigaray: "The way of breath"
- Malkemus & Romero: "Sexuality as a Transformational Path"
- Romero & Albareda: "Born on Earth"

Written Assignment Due: Please hand in a 2-3 page written reflection (**double spaced 12 pt font**) on your experience with the relationship between sex and spirit, and the context of its manifestation (personal, cultural, and historical); lights and shadows. Please write from your experience not from what you *think* about the topic but how it has manifest from the living ground of your experience. Further guidance will be offered in the preceding session.

Weekend Retreat II: The Dance of Sex and Spirit; The Embodiment of the Soul and The Heart as an Alchemical Vessel (Oct 25 & Oct 26)

- Introduction to the day and opening practice.
- Interactive Embodied Meditations: Accessing the heart as it interacts with our life force and consciousness. Organic inquiry into research questions.
- Integrative work: Silence and contemplation. Aesthetic/verbal elaboration of the experience. Circle of sharing.
- Sexuality and Spirituality: Integrating both. Healing and awakening. The embodiment of the soul and heart as an alchemical vessel. Accessing our deepest potentials. A holistic approach: an inner and outer participatory approach versus an “alienating” one.
- Articulating the focus for the presentations. Forming groups.
- Closure of the retreat.

Readings (to be handed out at the end of Sunday):

- Ferrer: “Embodied Spirituality, Now and Then”
- Feuerstein: “Toward an Erotic Spirituality for Today”

Written Assignment Due: Please hand in a 2-3 page written reflection (**double spaced 12 pt font**) on the development of your heart, the context of such development and its influence (personal, cultural, historic), internalized patterns that you can see; which is the role and influence of your heart in your daily life; lights and shadows. Please write from your experience not from what you *think* about the topic but how it has manifest from the living ground of your experience. Further guidance will be offered in the preceding session.

Weekend Retreat III: Manifesting Alive Seeds; Class Presentations and Culmination of Course (Nov 9 & Nov 10)

- Introduction to the day and opening exercise.
- Student presentations.
- Interactive Embodied Meditation: Contemplation of our vital world and consciousness as manifestations of the immanent and the transcendent; opening the heart to both.
- Integrative work: Silence and contemplation. Aesthetic/verbal elaboration of the experience. Circle of sharing.
- What is most alive at the end of the inquiry? Which new insights we may carry home?
- Ritual closure of the course.

Readings (to be handed out at the end of Sunday):

- Cousens: “Eros and Intimacy”
- Lee: “Spirituality and Sexuality do go Together”

→→→ Final Paper due no later than **November 24th**

Instructors:

Marina T. Romero is a therapist and teacher. Together with Ramon V. Albareda, she is the creator of *Holistic Transformation*, an integral approach to psycho-spiritual embodied growth and healing that works experientially with the body, sexuality, heart, mind, spirit, and nature. Marina is co-author of the book, *Nacidos de la Tierra. Sexualidad, Origen del Ser Humano*, as well as of many articles and book chapters on transpersonal sexuality, psychospiritual embodied development, and human nature as a holistic experience. Originally a passionate student of physics she then shifted her attention to exploring the mysteries of human nature and has been leading encounters in Holistic Transformation and Transpersonal and Transcendent Sexuality in Spain since 1987, in California since 2000, and in other countries since 2002.

Samuel A. Malkemus, PhD, has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's in philosophy and religion. A fifth generation Californian, Samuel has been co-leading Holistic Transformation workshops and individualized processes since 2008 and has experience leading Zen meditation, vision quests, and dream groups. A carpenter, astrologer, dancer, and lover of life, he is the co-author, together with Marina T. Romero, of the book chapter *Sexuality as a Transformational Path: Exploring the Holistic Dimensions of Human Vitality*, as well as the author of numerous other articles that carry forward a holistic vision of human nature.