

Sociology of Gender
Women's Studies 325/Sociology 325
Fall 2008, Section 401
T/TH 2-3:15
2309 Art-Sociology Building

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office hours: Tuesday 3:15-4 p.m. & by appt.

"Gender is fundamental, institutionalized, and enduring: yet because members of social groups must constantly (whether they realize it or not) 'do' gender to maintain their proper status, the seeds of change are ever present."
--Judith Lorber, 1987

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the sociological study of gender in contemporary U.S. society. Throughout the course we examine gender as a system of power and inequality and as a social construction that intersects with other major systems of power such as class, race/ethnicity, and sexuality. The first part of the course explores the various paradigms through which gender has been defined and theorized. In the second part of the course we move forward to examine how gender is built into the foundations and ideologies of social institutions and social practices. We specifically explore gender across a range of interconnected institutional domains and practices including family, work, education, politics, media & advertising, consumption, globalization, and religion. Finally, we consider processes and sites of social change.

This course requires you to do a **substantial amount of reading** and to develop your critical thinking and analytical skills. *Prerequisite: 3 credits in sociology or equivalent.*

CORE Diversity Course

Sociology of Gender satisfies the CORE Diversity Course requirement. By definition, such a course focuses primarily on a) the history, status, treatment, and/or accomplishment of women and/or "minority" groups and cultures; b) non-Western culture; and/or c) concepts and implications for diversity. Such courses allow students the opportunity to examine their ideas and values in an unfamiliar intellectual and/or social context.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability should inform the instructor immediately so appropriate accommodations can be made. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the instructor is appropriately meeting the needs of each individual student.

Required Readings

1. Collins, Patricia Hill and Margaret L. Anderson (Eds.). 2007. *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology*, 6th Edition. Thomson Wadsworth. ISBN#: 0495006890. [RCG]

2. Several additional required readings are posted on the course webboard (Blackboard). These can be accessed, downloaded and printed by clicking on "course documents" (<http://elms.umd.edu>). [BB]

Electronic Mail

You must have an electronic mail address. Coursemail will be utilized often so please keep Testudo informed of any changes to your electronic address. The coursemail addresses are socy325-0401-fall08@coursemail.umd.edu and wmst325-0401-fall08@coursemail.umd.edu. Messages sent to these addresses go to everyone in the course.

Blackboard

This course will be utilizing a webboard called Blackboard. Through this webboard you can access the course syllabus, required course readings, important

announcements & updates, and view your course grades. Blackboard is available at <http://elms.umd.edu>.

Attendance

Class meetings provide important information, documentary film material, handouts, small group exercises, and class discussions. University policy excuses the absences of students for illness, religious observances, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control. In most instances appropriate documentation is required, e.g. medical documentation. The complete University policy is printed in the Undergraduate Catalog and is available online at www.inform.umd.edu/ugradcat/. In the event that you must be excused from class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate and/or make an appointment with the instructor to receive missed materials. Lecture material will not be communicated via email.

In instances of absence(s) due to religious observance: The official UMD policy on religious observances www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii510a.html states that students must personally hand the instructor written notification of the projected absence within two weeks of the start of the semester.

Academic Integrity

Please affirm your commitment to the honor pledge ("I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment") on all your graded assignments. The Honor Code is printed in the Undergraduate Catalog and is available online at www.inform.umd.edu/ugradcat/. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Honor Council.

Course Requirements

Your final grade in this course will be based upon: 1) a gendered institutions paper (25%) 2) Six pop reading/film quizzes (25%) 3) a midterm exam (25%) 4) a final exam (25%).

1. Gendered Institutions Paper (25%). Due Tuesday, November 18th.

Each student will complete a 4-5 page (double spaced, 12 pt font) gendered institutions paper. Feminist sociologists argue that gender is present in the organizational frameworks, processes, practices, images and ideologies, symbols, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life. The purpose of this paper is to explore the ways in which gender organizes the structures and practices of major social institutions such as education, work/economy, religion, family, popular culture, consumption, politics, sports, science, technology, healthcare and medicine, and a variety of other social arenas. Additional details and specific evaluation criteria will be handed out in class and will be posted on the webboard.

2. Six Pop Reading/Film Quizzes (25%). Each quiz is worth 5% (lowest score dropped). The purpose of these quizzes is to 1) help students prepare for exams and 2) facilitate the completion of reading and film assignments. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes without appropriate documentation—no exceptions.

3. Midterm Examination (25%). Tuesday, October 21st.

The midterm exam will be administered in class on Tuesday, October 21st. The midterm exam is based on all material assigned or covered in the first half of the semester (readings, class discussions and lectures, films, etc.) and is a composition of multiple choice style questions.

4. Final Examination (25%). Thursday, December 18th.

The final exam is cumulative and based on ALL material assigned or covered in class (readings, class discussions and lectures, films, etc.) throughout the entire semester. It will consist of multiple choice and essay style questions.

Class Policies

The following description of class policies should be thought of as a contract. By agreeing to take this course, you are agreeing to the following policies. The instructor is required to be fair, consistent, and explicit.

1. **Late Work:** I do not allow make-ups on missed quizzes and tests without proper documentation (see attendance policy). All papers are due in class, at the beginning of class, on the due date. There is no exception for last minute computer, printer, or other problems. Don't wait until the last minute to write and print your work. Also, be sure to save a copy for yourself. I recognize that there are some extremely good reasons for requesting an extension. Proper documentation is required in all exceptional cases.
2. **Re-grading.** If you wish to discuss a grade, you can do so by making an appointment with the instructor within 48 hours after you receive the grade.
3. **Respectful Language and Discussion.** In this course, we will discuss issues that are highly controversial. Recognize that individuals experience the social world differently and come from vastly different backgrounds and life experiences. Recognize that there are many forms of knowledge, many ways of coming to know and we privilege these multiple and situated knowledges. This does not mean that we accept a relativist stance, meaning, we do not privilege any and all forms of knowledge, specifically those that are hierarchical, racist, sexist, exclusive, or hateful and/or oppressive in any way. Therefore, I expect you to use appropriate language in your writing & speaking by using respectful terms to identify groups. Personal attacks on other students or the instructor are not tolerated. For more info, refer to the "Statement on Classroom Climate" found in the Undergraduate Catalog (<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/0405/chapter4.pdf>).

Grading Scheme

Students have the opportunity to earn 100 percent to be distributed as follows:

Gendered Institutions Paper	25%
Pop Quizzes	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	94-96	B	84-86	C	74-76	D	64-66
A-	90-93	B-	80-83	C-	70-73	D-	60-63
						F	59 and below

NOTE on grading: In this class, an "A" is reserved for truly excellent work. If you earn an "A," you went above and beyond the call of duty not just with your effort but with your performance. A "B" indicates very good work. You did not just do the minimum requirements, but you made an extra effort to show your skills, and your effort showed. A "C" means you did average work—you did what was asked and you did it satisfactorily. A "D" indicates that you performed work below the minimum requirements. An "F" is guaranteed if you turned nothing in and do not show up or participate in class. An "A" and an "F" are hard to get in this class—all else are do-able, depending upon your effort.

Course Outline

Part I: Theoretical Perspectives on Gender

Tuesday, September 2

Topic: Introduction to the Course

Reading: No Reading is Due

Thursday, September 4

Topic: Overview of Gender Studies & Feminisms

Reading: "Why Race, Class, and Gender Still Matter," 1-16 (RCG)

"Oppression," 29-32 (RCG)

Film Clip: *1970, Half the People* (HQ1421.A2 1998)

Tuesday, September 9

Topic: The Social Construction of Gender

Reading: "Systems of Power and Inequality," 61-90 (RCG)

Film Clip: *Spin the Bottle* (HV5135.S66)

Thursday, September 11

Topic: Masculinities, Patriarchy & Privilege

Reading: "Masculinities and Athletic Careers," 172-183 (RCG)

"White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," 98-102 (RCG)

"Of Race and Risk," 103-105 (RCG)

Film Clip: *Tough Guise* (P96.S5 T68 1999)

Tuesday, September 16

Topic: The Social Construction of Sexualities

Reading: "The Invention of Heterosexuality," 252-264 (RCG)

"Dueling Duelisms," Anne Fausto-Sterling (BB)

Film Clip: *Kinsey*

Thursday, September 18

Topic: The Social Construction of Sex

Reading: "All Together Now: Intersex Infants and IGM," Riki Wilchins (BB)

"Of Gender and Genitals," Anne Fausto-Sterling (BB)

Tuesday, September 23

Topic: Queering the Categories of Sex, Sexuality, and Gender

Reading: "Beyond the Binaries," Judith Lorber (BB—only pages 143-151)

Film Clip: *Transgeneration*

Part II: Gendered Institutions

Thursday, September 25

Topic: Gender in Families

*****Film Viewing in Nonprint Media Center***** (*Daddy and Papa* HQ 75.28.U6 D33 2002)

Reading: "Straight is to Gay as Family is to No Family," 343-348 (RCG)

"Making Babies the American Girl Way," Kapsalis (BB)

Tuesday, September 30

Topic: Gendered Families

Reading: "The Structure of Social Institutions," 267-282 (RCG)

"Our Mothers' Grief," 321-335 (RCG)

Thursday, October 2

Topic: Gender in Families

Reading: "Household Labor & the Routine Production of Gender," Scott Coltrane (BB)

Film Clip: *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*

Tuesday, October 7

Topic: Gender in Intimate Relationships

Reading: "The Feminization of Love," Cancian (BB)

Thursday, October 9

Topic: Gender in Intimate Relationships

Reading: "Get Your Freak On," Patricia Hill Collins (BB)

Tuesday, October 14

Topic: Gender in Education

Reading: "Missing in Interaction," Sadker (BB)

"The Egg and Sperm," Emily Martin (BB)

Thursday, October 16

Topic: Catch-up/Exam Review
Reading: No Reading is Due

Tuesday, October 21

*****MIDTERM EXAM*****

Thursday, October 23

Topic: Gender & Economics

*****View Film in Nonprint Media Center***** (*Behind the Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan*)

Reading: "Globetrotting Sneaker," by Cynthia Enloe (BB)

Tuesday, October 28

Topic: Politics, Nations, & Citizenship

Reading: "Policing the National Body," 450-458 (RCG)

"Welfare Reform, Family Hardship, and Women of Color," 413-421 (RCG)

Thursday, October 30

Topic: Work & Global Economy

Reading: "Domestica," 313-320 (RCG)

"Race, Class, Gender, and Women's Works," 283-292 (RCG)

Film Clip: *Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter* (D810.W7 L53 1987)

Tuesday, November 4

Topic: Health & Reproductive Rights

Reading: "Just Choices," 433-441 (RCG)

Meika Loe & Saccio Interview, "The Rise (and Rise) of Viagra" available on the web at: http://www.motherjones.com/news/qa/2004/09/09_415.html

Film: *The Pill* (RG 137.5.P547 1999)

Thursday, November 6

Topic: Gender in Cultures

Reading: "Racist Stereotyping in the English Language," 365-376 (RCG)

"Crimes Against Humanity," 376-383 (RCG)

Tuesday, November 11

Topic: Gender in Media

Reading: "You Talkin' to Me?" 228-233 (RCG)

Film: *Killing Us Softly 3* (HF5827.K56)

Thursday, November 13

Topic: Gender in Media

Reading: "B-Boys, Players, and Preachers," Imani Perry (BB)

Film Clip: *Beyond Beats and Rhymes* (ML3531.H57)

Tuesday, November 18

Topic: Gender & Bodies

Reading: "Technologies of the Gendered Body, Intro" Anne Balsamo (BB--only pages 1-11)

Gendered Institutions Papers Due (25%)

Thursday, November 20

Topic: Gender & Bodies

Reading: "A Way Outa No Way," Becky Thompson (BB)

"On the Cutting Edge," Anne Balsamo (BB--all)

Special Guest Lecture

Tuesday, November 25-27

*****NO CLASS. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!*****

Tuesday, December 2

Topic: Gender in Religions

Reading: "Women and Religion," Andersen (BB)

Thursday, December 4

Topic: Gendered Violence

****Online course evaluation system opens (December 2-14). Please complete your evaluation at www.courseevalum.umd.edu.**

Reading: "Stopping Sexual Harrassment," Robert Brown (BB)

Tuesday, December 9

Topic: Resistance & Social Change

Reading: "Social Change and Sites of Change," 481-492 (RCG)

"Manifesta," 547-550 (RCG)

"Can I Get a Witness: Testimony From a Hip Hop Feminist," 557-564 (RCG)

Thursday, December 11

Topic: Final Exam Review

Reading: No Reading is Due

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 18 @ 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. NO EARLY OR LATE EXAMS!!