

Sociology of Gender
Women's Studies 325/Sociology 325
Spring 2009
3207 Art-Sociology Building

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“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.

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

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course and for being aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. 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. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.shc.umd.edu>. 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 research 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, April 7.

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 Blackboard.

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 absolutely no make-ups for missed quizzes without appropriate documentation—no exceptions.

3. Midterm Examination (25%). Tuesday, March 10.

The midterm exam will be administered in class on Tuesday, March 10. 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 matching and multiple-choice style questions.

4. Final Examination (25%).

The final exam will be administered during the official University scheduled examination time (TBA). All students must take the exam at this time (no early/late exams will be administered). The exam will be based on the post-midterm materials assigned or covered in class (readings, class discussions and lectures, films, etc.). It will consist of multiple-choice and matching 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). The paper is 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. Papers will lose 1 point (5 percentage points) per each late school day (for example: a 19/20 score would be marked down to an 18/20).
- 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. We should all recognize that individuals experience the social world differently and come from vastly different backgrounds and life experiences. Therefore, please refrain from using concepts and terms that are hierarchical, racist, sexist, exclusive, or hateful and/or oppressive in any way. Please 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, January 27

Topic: Introduction to the Course

Reading: No Reading is Due

Thursday, January 29

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, February 3

Topic: The Social Construction of Gender

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

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

Thursday, February 5

Topic: The Social Construction of Gender: 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, February 10

Topic: The Social Construction of Sexualities

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

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

Film Clip: *Kinsey*

Thursday, February 12

Topic: The Social Construction of Sex

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

Tuesday, February 17

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, February 19

Topic: Gender in Families

View Film 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, February 24

Topic: Gendered Families

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

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

Film Clip: *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*

Thursday, February 26

Topic: Gender in Families

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

Tuesday, March 3

Topic: Gender in Intimate Relationships

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

Thursday, March 5

Topic: Midterm Exam Review

Reading: No Reading is Due

Tuesday, March 10

*****Midterm Exam: Please bring a #2 pencil & your UMD ID # to class**

Thursday, March 12

*****View Film in Nonprint Media Center*****

Tuesday, March 17 & Thursday, March 19

*****HAPPY SPRING BREAK*****

Tuesday, March 24

Topic: Gender & Education

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

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

Thursday, March 26

Topic: Labor Market Discrimination & the Gender Wage Gap

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

"Domestica," 313-320 (RCG)

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

Tuesday, March 31

Topic: Global Economy

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

Film: *Behind the Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan*

Thursday, April 2

Topic: Politics, Nations, & Citizenship

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

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

Tuesday, April 7

Topic: Reproductive Control

Reading: 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)

*****Gendered Institutions Research Papers Due*****

Thursday, April 9

Topic: Gender & Health

Reading: "Masculinities and Men's Health," Sabo (BB)

Tuesday, April 14

Topic: Gender in Media Cultures

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

View film in Nonprint Media (*Beyond Beats and Rhymes* ML3531.H57)

Thursday, April 16

Topic: Gender in Cultures & Media

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

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

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

Tuesday, April 21

Topic: Gender & Bodies

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

Thursday, April 23

Topic: Gender & Bodies

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

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

Special Guest Lecture

Tuesday, April 28

Topic: Gender in Religions

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

Thursday, April 30

Special Guest Presentation

Reading: No Reading is Due

Tuesday, May 5

Topic: Gendered Violence

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

Thursday, May 7

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)

Tuesday, May 12

Topic: Final Exam Review

Reading: No Reading is Due

FINAL EXAM WEEK: May 14-20