

SOCI 4450
Sociology of Sex and Gender

Class: Lalumiere 396, TuTh 11-12:15

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:30-5 or by appointment

The first question people ask about a baby, even before it is born is: “Is it a boy or a girl?” Common sense tells us that men and women are opposites: men are from Mars, women are from Venus; boys are aggressive and girls are passive. This course challenges some of these common sense assumptions about gender, gender difference, and inequality with studies based on social-scientific evidence and the theories that draw from it. Definitions of gender permeate our lives, but have changed over time and have different meanings in different cultures. By looking beyond individual, biological, and psychological analyses of gender to see how gender is regulated and produced by social institutions and interactions, this course will suggest other ways of thinking about seemingly natural and timeless gender differences. We will explore the ways that gender is thought to mean different things when people think about different races and ethnicities, and we will explore how assumptions about sexuality and race anchor socially-constructed definitions of gender to make those definitions seem “natural.”

The course begins by exploring common sense concepts of sex and gender, and introducing concepts for thinking about these categories critically. We will problematize explanations based on “nature,” and throughout the term we will explore how gender is socially constructed and maintained in social structures, institutions and interactions and these social processes shape individuals’ consciousness. We will explore how gendered categories relate to race, class, and sexual orientation, and how social power works through these categories to shape our lives. We will how people internalize gender and other vectors of identity such that these social constructs come to define our subjectivity, our very feelings about who we are. In the latter part of the term, we will explore gender as it is produced in and structures institutions including work, family, marriage and religion.

Texts:

Most of the readings appear in three books:

- *Sex, Gender, Sexuality: The New Basics*, ed. by Abby Ferber, Kimberly Holcomb, and Tre Wentling (Oxford University Press, 2008). This book is available at both bookstores (the one in the AMU and Sweeney’s). **denoted [SGS]**
- *Women Without Class*, by Julie Bettie (U. Calif. Press, 2003). This book is also available at both bookstores.
- *Feminist Frontiers IV*, FOURTH EDITION, edited by Laurel Richardson, Verta Taylor, and Nancy Whittier. (McGraw-Hill, 1997). This book is available online, fairly cheaply since it is out of print; it is important to have the FOURTH edition. **denoted {FF4}**

All of these books are also available at the Raynor reserve desk.

***In addition, there will be about 10 articles available on reserve. These articles are denoted ®, and are just as important as those readings that are in the books.** If there is enough interest, I may also make these readings available for purchase in a course pack from Sweeney’s. The password for our class reserves is **gender**.

Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation (25%).

Daily attendance is required, as is active participation. I track attendance daily. You may be called on without warning to answer question about the readings, and participation in classroom discussions and activities is mandatory. There may be pop quizzes. You should come to class prepared with written notes, questions, or comments on the day's readings, and be able to state in a sentence what each author's main point is and how the text relates to the class discussions. This is an important part of your grade. Coming to office hours and discussing the course material with me is also a form of participation, and perfect attendance also shows commitment to and engagement with the course.

Please note that Marquette policy allows instructors to reduce the course grade for absence and/or to drop a student from the class for excessive absences. More than **two** unexcused absences will result in lowering the participation grade drastically. Any student missing eight or more classes will receive an F for participation.

2. Two 500- to 700-word memos (25% each for a total of 50%)

Each student will be assigned two weeks' readings on which to write a brief memo, due via turnitin.com by 9AM on the Thursday of the week assigned, and on paper in class that Thursday. I may use these memos to help facilitate discussion. **Class ID: 3712269 Password: gender**

3. Final Exam (25%).

The assigned final exam period for this class is Thursday, 12 May, 1-3 pm. We will determine as a class what format the final exam will take.

Memo Assignments

In each memo, you will formulate a question for discussion and develop an initial answer to it. There are many ways to ask a question in a way that it will help you and others to gain clarity or facilitate discussion. A good way to start is to begin with a specific passage from the week's readings that you find interesting, troubling, or difficult, and quote that passage at the beginning of your memo. Then, discuss that passage. What questions does it raise for you, or what questions do you think it might raise for the class? If you find the passage difficult to understand, you could use this space as an opportunity to "think on paper" about what the author might be saying—how does s/he define key terms, what relationships does s/he observe between social forces, what question is s/he trying to answer? How do subsequent passages help you to make sense of the passage you began with? Other possible questions might include: (a) Did he, she, or they define terms earlier, that might help us to make sense of this passage? (b) How does this author build on or disagree with another author from our course? (c) If the author's examples seem outdated, can you think of a contemporary example that might help to explain what they are getting at? Do you think that what they are saying is no longer valid, or is it valid in a different way? (d) Are there ways the author seems to contradict him- or herself? If so, how does the author attempt to resolve that contradiction? Does she or he succeed? You do not need to answer all of these questions—they are just some possible ways to articulate a helpful discussion question.

If you wish, you may compare and contrast two or more readings, for their authors' perspectives on a phenomenon, definitions of a concept, etc. What do they have in common? How do they differ? Can their views be reconciled?

We may use students' questions as springboards for class discussion as well as for the final exam. You are not required to submit your memo to the entire class, and you need not identify yourself as a question's author, although you may if you wish. However, as the semester progresses and we grow more comfortable with each other, I may call on you as the memo's author to clarify a

particular point you raised. Having me ask about your memo implies no value judgment—strong and weak memos are equally likely to inspire me to ask for further elaboration.

Each memo should be **proofread and edited** so that the process of writing and revising helps you to clarify your thinking as you clarify your writing. Memos will receive lower grades if they contain grammatical or word-choice errors, incomplete sentences, or are not well thought out. **I will stop reading at the fourth typographical, spelling, or grammatical error, and your memo will be returned to you ungraded.** Memos will be graded on the formulation of the question, how well you ground your response in the readings, how clearly you present your ideas, and writing style (grammar and organization). **Consult the grading rubric, included in this syllabus, so you know what constitutes an A memo, and the meaning of the various grades.**

Memo Goals:

An outstanding memo will have the following features: (a) A strong thesis statement, (b) an appropriate selection of authors, (c) quotations from the reading, (d) evidence backing up each of your claims, (e) clear, effective organization, and (f) excellent word choice, grammar, sentence structure, and editing.

You **MUST** use quotations from the readings, cited properly (Author,page), to support your claims.

Your essay must be 600-800 words. Please be sure to spell-check and proofread your work; it can be very helpful to have a friend read over it to be sure it is free of typographical and grammatical errors. Strunk & White's *Elements of Style* is a very handy little guide to writing well.

Memos are due at the 9AM on the Thursday of the week assigned. The paper will be counted as a day late if you submit it after the deadline. Late papers will lose one-half letter grade for each day they are late.

Note on Memo Assignments:

If it is not convenient for you to submit a memo on one of the weeks you have been assigned, you may trade with another student. To ensure that there is no confusion and that you each receive grades for your memos, you must **both** inform me of the trade.

REWRITE POLICY:

All good writing is actually the product of multiple revisions, so I allow rewrites, with the following caveats:

1. Your grade is not guaranteed to go up, just because you have rewritten the memo. Grades may stay the same or go down.

The best way to ensure a substantially improved grade is to improve the substance of your memo. I note grammatical, spelling and similar errors, and I often make stylistic suggestions. These are not the only changes that you will need to make if you are going to improve your grade. Begin your rewrite by reading my comments and writing a proposal of the substantive changes you plan to make. As you complete the revision of your rewrite, be sure it is free of grammatical or spelling errors, particularly any of the kinds that I identified in the first version.

2. For me to accept a re-write **you must confer with me** about your proposed changes, whether you understand my comments or not. In our discussion, I will be happy to clarify my comments or make suggestions.

3. For me to accept a re-write it must be submitted **on paper**, formatted and stapled, **with the original (and my comments) attached**, one week after the date your group's memos were returned.

LATE PAPER POLICY:

While I may confirm receipt of your memo, it is your responsibility to be sure I received it on time. Late memos or other assignments will lose 1/2 grade for each day they are late, beginning after the time they are due. Memos are due at 9 am on the Thursday of the assigned week via email (not as an attachment).

**** Note on policies****

The memos and exams are intended to assess how much you have learned from this course. Plagiarism (including taking material off of the internet and submitting it as your own), and other forms of academic misconduct are severe offenses and will be penalized according to Marquette's policy on academic honesty, which can be found online at:

<http://www.marquette.edu/academics/regulations/acaddishonesty.html> . At the very last, plagiarism and other forms of cheating will result in an F for the assignment (without the opportunity to make it up) and a report to your Dean of Students and the Chair of SOCS.

Please note that you will be expected to display an understanding only of materials that we have covered in our readings and/or discussions—you will not need to use the internet to pass this course. Indeed, the internet is full of misinformation which, if used uncritically, may even hurt your performance in this course. You may refer to something you find on the internet in your journal in order to illustrate a problematic you wish to analyze, but please DO NOT rely on it as a resource for your analysis. The analysis should emerge from your own thought process, in engagement with the readings and class discussions.

Memo Grading Rubric

These memos are brief, but they are each worth a quarter of your final grade so they need to be good! On your memo, I will endeavor to provide thoughtful, helpful comments to explain the grade I have given and what it would take to improve the memo. Memos may be re-written for an average of the two grades, providing you meet the requirements on p. 3 of this syllabus.

Explanation of memo grades:

- A** Poses an important and clear question and provides a thoughtful, thought-provoking analysis of the reading(s) discussed. Detailed, close reading of text or a fruitful, careful comparison of two or more texts. May offer a thoughtful challenge to the reading's argument or analysis, or pushes beyond a summary of the reading. Assertions are backed with convincing evidence. Quotations are present and have page references. Memo is beautifully written, edited, and well-crafted—the discussion includes some sort of thesis statement or concluding statement, paragraphs follow a clear logic.
- AB** Excellent on all but one of the above measures. Could be pushed a bit farther, or reveals a minor slip of logic, or needs better organization or evidence.
- B** Fulfills basic requirements of assignment, as laid out in syllabus. May involve more summary than engagement with the text. Engages text, but might lack full detail or depth. May reveal only a cursory understanding of text in some small aspect. May contain slips of logic. May be lacking in direct quotations. May have minor problems with grammar or style. An otherwise-perfect book report would merit *no higher* than a B.
- BC** Fulfills basic requirements of assignment, but severely lacking in one or more areas. Memos that ask numerous questions and provide answers that do not engage deep thinking risk falling into this category. May be generally correct but poorly edited or not very clear. May articulate questions very well, but reflect a shaky grasp of the readings.
- C** Makes a good point or engages with one point of reading, though perhaps not to full, logical conclusion. May have serious grammatical errors or style problems. May seem hurried or slapdash, or reflect a weak understanding of the readings. May focus more on personal experiences or opinions rather than engaging the text. May have more than one of the problems listed as qualifying for a BC.
- CD** Shows some effort, but contains serious errors or problems. May be missing direct quotations from the readings, or show very weak grasp. May have serious grammatical errors or style problems.
- D** Shows some effort. Significantly under-theorized. Not completely incorrect or without insight. May have serious grammatical errors or style problems.
- F** Shows very little effort. Significantly under-theorized. Makes incorrect assertions. Reveals little grasp of the reading. May have serious grammatical errors or style problems.

READINGS:

WEEK 1 18 January	Introduction: Rethinking Sex, Gender and Nature
20 January	Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling Dualisms" [SGS 1] ® Joan W. Scott, "Deconstructing Equality vs. Difference," from Hirsch and Keller, eds, <i>Conflicts in Feminism</i> , 134-148
WEEK 2 25 January	Karen Yescavage and Jonathan Alexander, "Muddying the Waters" [SGS 2] Sharen E. Preves, "Intersex Narratives: Gender, Medicine, and Identity" [SGS 3]
27 January GROUP A	Emily Martin, "The Egg and the Sperm" [SGS 22] Gloria Steinem, "If Men Could Menstruate" {FF4: pp. 358-9} ® Robert M. Sapolsky, "Testosterone Rules" <i>Discover</i> 1997
WEEK 3 1 February	Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body" [SGS 26] Patricia Hill Collins, "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought" {FF4:11}
3 February GROUP B	Social Construction: Macro (Economy & Kinship) ® Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women," [abridged], pp. 155-171 in <i>Feminist Frameworks</i> , ed by Jagger and Rothenberg (McGraw-Hill, 1984).
WEEK 4 8 February	® John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity," pp. 467-478 in <i>The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader</i> , ed. by Abelove, Barale, and Halperin (Routledge, 1993)
10 February GROUP C	Social Construction through Interaction 1. —in Childhood Nancy Chodorow, "Family Structure and Feminine Personality" {FF4: 17}, and inset by Elisabeth V. Spelman
WEEK 5 15 February	Barrie Thorne, "Girls and Boys Together... But Mostly Apart" {FF4: 20} Letty Cottin Pogrebin, "The Secret Fear..." {FF4: 19}
17 February GROUP D	2. —in Everyday Life Candace West & Don R. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender" [SGS 4]
WEEK 6 22 February	R. W. Connell, "Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity" {FF4: 4} Michael S. Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity" [SGS 5]
24 February GROUP E	Laurel Richardson, "Gender Stereotyping in the English Language" {FF4: 12} (and insets)

WEEK 7 1 March	3. —in Creating Knowledge ® Carol Cohn, “Wars, Wimps and Women” Jane Ussher, “Sexual Science and the Law: Regulating Sex—Reifying the Power of Heterosexual Men” [SGS 36]
3 March GROUP A	4. —through Violence ® Valerie Smith, “Split Affinities: The Case of Interracial Rape” <i>Conflicts in Feminism</i> , 271-87, ed. by Hirsch and Keller (Routledge, 1990). Andrea Smith, “Rape and the War Against Native Women” [SGS 34]
WEEK 8 8 March	5. —in Experiences of Sex ® Karin A. Martin, “I Couldn’t Ever Picture Myself Having Sex...” Video: <i>Flight of the Conchords</i>
10 March	NO CLASS! Good luck on Midterms and have a great break!
15-17 March	Midterm break!!!
WEEK 9 22 March	Social Construction: Institutional ® Barbara Risman, “Gender as Structure,” from <i>Mapping the Social Landscape</i> , ed. by Ferguson (McGraw-Hill 2009).
24 March GROUP B	1. School Julie Bettie, <i>Women Without Class</i>
WEEK 10 29 March	Julie Bettie, <i>Women Without Class</i>
31 March GROUP C	Julie Bettie, <i>Women Without Class</i>
WEEK 11 5 April	2. Work Barbara Reskin, “Bringing the Men Back In” {FF4: 23} ® Kristin Schilt, “Just One of the Guys? How Transmen Make Gender Visible at Work” <i>Gender and Society</i> 20:4, 465-90.
7 April GROUP D	Beverly W. Jones, “Race, Sex & Class” {FF4: 24} Robin Leidner, “Serving Hamburgers and Selling Insurance” {FF4: 25}
WEEK 12 12 April	3. Families Hochschild, Arlie Russell. “The Second Shift,” {FF4: 263} ® Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Russell Hochschild, “Global Woman”
14 April GROUP E	4. The State ® Nancy Fraser, “Women, Welfare, and the Politics of Need Interpretation” ® Kathryn Edin & Maria Kefalas, “Promises I Can Keep” from <i>Mapping the Social Landscape</i> , 5 th edition, ed. by Ferguson (McGraw-Hill 2006).
Week 13 19 April	Abigail Halcli & Jo Reger, “Strangers in a Strange Land” {FF4: 45}

16 April	No Class: Easter Break— Have a Good One!
WEEK 14 26 April	5. Religion ® Dawne Moon, “Discourse, Interaction, and Testimony” <i>Theory & Society</i> (2005) 34: 551-577. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers” http://www.usccb.org/laity/always.shtml
28 April	Exodus International testimonies MOVIE: <i>But I'm a Cheerleader!</i>
WEEK 15 3 May	Finish movie and discuss
5 May	Review for final
Thursday, 12 May, 1-3 pm	Final Exam
	HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!! Congratulations, Graduates!!