

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER

Sociology 226

T 6-8:50

ARC 3009

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Course Objective

This seminar is intended to introduce graduate students to diverse theories that explain gender relations in contemporary society. Consequently this seminar is intended to provide a critical perspective on how we construct male and female identities and how the consequences of such a construction affect institutions, culture and society. The course is broken up into four sections. The first will be an introduction to the ideas, concepts and methods of studying gender and gender inequality in society. The second section will deal directly with the major theories of gender analysis, the differences between the perspectives and the projected ways of challenging inequality. The third section will continue discussions of theory by applying theory to groups that had been marginalized in previous theoretical discussions. The ideas and theories in this section problematize both theoretical and epistemological aspects of gender and raise important issues for sociological practices. Finally, in the fourth section, the course will address the issues that arise in society in relation to gender. Much of this section will be spent discussing empirical research, but theory will be addressed throughout.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate basic understanding of the different theoretical perspectives related to the analysis of gender.
2. Understand and discuss methods of research in the field of gender.
3. Recognize and critically examine the construction of gendered individuals and their relation to society.
4. Identify diverse presentations and experiences of gender in society, with special attention to the intersection between gender, race, class and sexuality.
5. Critically analyze the relationship between gender and other social institutions.
6. Express an understanding of the role gender plays in society and its relation to issues of inequality.

Texts

Course Reader. (They are all located online on WebCT. You are required to read/copy/print all of them.)

Gender Inequality, 5th ed. Lorber, Judith. 2012. Los Angeles: Oxford.

Feminist Perspectives on Social Research. 2004. Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Yaiser, Michelle. New York: Oxford.

Requirements

All of the assignments are considered generally equal in their impact on your grade, as they all will allow you to show your comprehension and engagement with the material. Greater weight can be taken from any one of the assignments as each student can be better at expressing understanding in different formats. Still, each assignment also displays a different skill, each of which may carry greater importance in your experience as a graduate student (such as paper development and writing is an important skill).

Paper: A short research project in which you will study some aspect of gender, whether it is through interviews, observations, surveys, you will analyze gender in the world. You will be expected to draw on the readings and class discussions, as well as to use outside materials in your paper. Be prepared to discuss the ideas and findings in the paper on the last day of class.

Paper Presentation: Every student will be required to present their research topic to the class, including a review of relevant literature and an explanation of the research (methods).

Reading Presentation: Every person will be expected to present one article from the reader to the class. You will explain the article to the class, and simply summarize it (this should be short and easy to understand. If you can, try to identify, in one sentence, what the article is about. Then take a little time to explain this, including what they offered to support the ideas. If you do not understand it, then you can come and talk to me, but try to figure it out on your own first before coming to me so we can talk about it and not just have me lecture at you). You will also be expected to go beyond the article, bringing in outside material, all to create discussion. You should end with discussion topic/questions for the class, and you should help to facilitate the discussion.

Article Reviews: You are required each week to write up a short analytical commentary about the readings that are not being presented in class. You should end with a thought or question that goes beyond the readings discussed. You can focus on one reading, but it would be better to identify a connection between the readings. You will submit this online Sunday to allow other students to review your papers. Be open and ready to bringing in ideas from any of the reviews in the class discussion.

Your discussion about and engagement with these writings in class will be assessed (if people are not talking in class and showing they have read the material, then I will require you to write your discussion responses online so I am counting them. Don't free ride, or I will require everyone to do this).

Group Work, Class Involvement and Attendance: You may be placed in work groups throughout the semester if it is needed to help facilitate involvement of all students. The focus will not be to simply discuss the material, but drawing out the ideas to bigger discussions beyond the articles and readings. Your analytical papers will help you to do this. Many of the readings will be presented in class in greater detail, but I may have you work in groups prior to the presentation to be prepared to be part of the discussions created by the presentation (again, contingent on your involvement). You are also expected to offer comments during class discussions that reflect on the ideas and more importantly, on the readings. This is your opportunity to show me you are keeping up with the reading, analyzing it and are able to engage it beyond description. Finally, you are required to attend all of the classes. Understand if you miss, it can affect your grade.

Submitting your weekly article reviews online:

When you log onto SacCT and connect into the course page. On the Course Tools Menu on the left side of the course page, click on the "Assignments" Link (this is a different link from the "Assignments" Link on the home page). There will be a list of class assignments that are based on weeks/topics of the course. Choose the link that represents the class assignment for which you are submitting the write up (i.e. which week of the class you are submitting). These are due on Sunday. You then need to post these online on the discussion board for everyone else to see and read. You will then read at least two papers (different papers from different students each week). The idea is to consider the ideas/questions raised in the papers and be ready to respond to them (discuss them in greater depth).

Schedule

Part I Beginnings and Understandings

Week One

Overview of class. Discussion with everyone about Gender issues in society, directions to go and concerns in academia with gender. Review of article in class.

Week Two

Origins of gender/gender inequality

Reader:

Bem: Dismantling Gender Polarization and Compulsory Heterosexuality

Buss: Sexual Strategies Theory

Paechter: Masculine femininities/feminine masculinities

Johnson, Gender Knot, Chapter 1

Lorber: Believing is seeing: Biology is ideology

Week Three

Researcher Methods in Gender Research: Concerns and controversies

Hesse-Biber and Yaiser, Readings 1, 2, 13, 17, 22

Reader:

Crawford & Kimmel: Promoting Methodological Diversity in Feminist Research

Dunn & Waller: The methodological inclinations of gender scholarship in mainstream sociology journals

Week Four

Feminism and Power

Lorber: Preface, Chapter 13

Reader:

Tong: Introduction: The Diversity of Feminist Thinking

Steinem: If Men Could Menstruate

Walker: Couples Watching Television

Sheffield: Sexual Terrorism

Vianello: Gender and Access to Power

Spivey: Distancing and Solidarity as Resistance to Sexual Objectification in a Nude Dancing Bar

Part II Theories of Gender Development

Week Five

Marxist, Socialist and Radical Feminists

Lorber, Chapters 2, 3 & 5

Reader:

Colley: A 'Rough Guide' to the History of Mentoring from a Marxist Feminist Perspective

Seelhoff: Radical feminism and the politics of pregnancy and child birth

Blum: Possibilities and Limits of the Comparable Worth Movement

George: A peace plan for the gender war

Week Six

Social Constructionist, Psychoanalytic and Liberal Feminists

Lorber, Chapters 1, 7, & 9

Reader:

West & Zimmerman: Doing Gender

McGuffey & Rich: Playing in the Gender Transgression Zone

Carr: Tomboy resistance and conformity

Part III: Applying theory beyond the dominant group

Week Seven

Men and Masculinity in Gender Studies: Controversy with both

Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, Reading 10, 14

Lorber, Chapter 11

Reader: bell hooks: Men: Comrades in Struggle

Kaufman: The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence
Messner: Politics of Masculinities, Chapter 1
Kendall: "Oh No! I'm a Nerd": Hegemonic Masculinity....
Connell: The Social Organization of Masculinity
Deutsch: Male Privilege Checklist

Week Eight

Multicultural Feminism: Moving beyond White, Middle-class Feminism

Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, Readings 6

Lorber, Chapters 8 & 10

Reader:

McIntosh: White Privilege and Male Privilege: Unpacking the White Knapsack

Tuana (and discussion): With Many Voices

hooks: Feminism—It's a Black Thang!

Collins: Toward a New Vision

Woods: Black Male Privilege Checklist

Week Nine

Queer Theory and Sexuality

Lorber 6 & 12

Hesse-Biber & Yaiser: 11

Reader:

Rochlin: Heterosexual Questionnaire

Katz: "Homosexual" and "Heterosexual"

Bem: Exotic becomes Erotic

Townley: Lesbians play football too

Dozier: Beards, Breast, and Bodies

Part IV Gender in Society

Week Ten

Socialization and Childhood: Learning Gender

Reader:

Messner: Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities

Carter & Hesse-Biber: Socialization and the Production of Gender Inequality

Bem: Feminist Child-rearing

Smith: Schooling for Inequality

Burnham & Harris: Effects of Real Gender.....

Week Eleven

Work and Gender: Inequality in the Workplace

Reader:

O'Neill: The gender gap in wages

Lips: The gender pay gap: Concrete indicator of women's progress toward equality (with O'Neill's article)

Williams: Glass Escalator

Giuffre & Williams: Boundary Lines

Henson & Rogers: "Why Marcia you've changed!"
Martin: Humor in Middle Management

Week Twelve

Family and Gender: Marriage, Housework and Childcare

Reader:

Hays: Mommy Wars
Young: The Mommy Wars
Marcusa: Revisiting the Mommy Wars
Gardner: Search for a truce in 'Mommy Wars'
Coltrane: Families and Gender Equity
Hochschild: The Second Shift
Popenoe: Parental Androgyny

Week Thirteen

Violence: Is it a gendered issue?

Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, Reading 14

Reader:

White, Donat & Bondurant: A developmental examination of violence against girls and women
Felson: Violence and Gender Reexamined (with White article)
Straus: Physical Assaults by Wives
Kurz: Physical Assaults by Husbands
Quinn: Sexual Harassment and Masculinity
Berns: Degendering the problem and gendering the blame
Lafferty & McKay: Suffragettes in Satin Shorts

Week Fourteen

Media, language and final thoughts

Lorber, Chapter 14

Reader:

Messner, Duncan & Jensen: Separating the Men from the Girls: The Gendered language of Televised Sports
Kang: The Portrayal of Women's Images in Magazine Advertisements
Barron & Kimmel: Sexual Violence in Three Pornographic Media

Week Fifteen

Discussions and Presentations