GENDER ROLES
SOCIOLOGY 3352
FALL 2009

INSTRUCTOR: MERYL G. NASON
OFFICE: GR 2.612
OFFICE HOURS: MW 11:30—1:45PM and R 3:15-3:45 and by appointment
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E-MAIL: Mnason@UTDallas.edu
Please note that I do NOT use WEBCT for e-mail.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The study of gender has emerged as one of the most important trends in the discipline of Sociology in the twentieth century. The purpose of this course is to study the “social construction of gender.” In addition, we will explore how gender intersects with other social categories, such as race, social class, ethnicity, religion, age and sexuality. Topics to be explored include gender and the media, the economy, health issues, politics, education, and crime and deviance. We will discuss how the various sociological perspectives have viewed gender issues with particular emphasis on feminist theory. We will also discuss how men and masculinity are viewed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the sociological perspectives on gender and recognize the differences between gender and sex.

2. Explore a variety of gender related issues and see how they impact your personal, professional and academic lives.

3. Demonstrate an awareness that men’s identities and practices are gendered and that masculinity varies among cultures and within cultures over time.

4. Recognize that gender roles are not a uniform set of expectations and outcomes.

COURSE TEXTS:

The major texts for the course will be: Margaret L. Andersen, *Thinking About Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender*, 8th edition, Allyn and Bacon, 2009.


Themes of the Times for Sexuality and Gender, Allyn and Bacon, 2005.
CLASSS FORMAT AND INSTRUCTOR’S EXPECTATIONS:

The format will be lecture/discussion with the addition of visiting speakers and films. The instructor of this course makes several assumptions about the students enrolled in this course. As a student in this course, you will be expected to:

1. Attend class on a regular basis.

2. Be prepared for class (i.e., have a writing instrument and paper or a computer in your possession; have read the assigned materials prior to class).

3. Participate in class. Students are expected to actively participate and will be assigned a grade for participation (10% of final grade). If something is covered in lecture or in the text or readings which you do not understand, ASK A QUESTION (chances are at least one or more of your colleagues will have the same or similar question). You will be held responsible for the assigned materials on the examinations, so it is in your best interest to ask questions.

4. Be present and prepared for all examinations. The term “prepared” in this context means not only having studied the materials you are to be tested on and showing up at the appropriate time, but also having a BLUE BOOK, SCANTRON, and a Blue or Black Pen in your possession on the day of the exam.

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Grades will be determined on the basis of the following point scale:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three Exams each worth 200</td>
<td>600</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Writing Assignments each 150 pts</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL POSSIBLE</strong></td>
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1. Exams: There will be three examinations for the class, the first the week of September 28th, the second the week of November 2nd, and the third on December 7th. Each exam will count 20% toward the final grade.

Exams will consist of multiple choice, matching, true/false and essays unless otherwise instructed. They will cover only the material since the last exam (i.e. non-comprehensive). The essay portion will be take home.

Exam material will come from lecture and assigned readings. Any handout materials supplied by the instructor may also appear on that section’s exam.

Prior to the exam, a part of the class will be devoted to questions and answers as a review.
2. **Research Project:** There will be TWO short papers required. Each paper will be worth 15% of your grade for a total of 30%. More information will be forthcoming on the papers.

3. **Participation:** Class participation will be worth 10% of your grade. You should plan to attend class regularly, come prepared, and participate in class discussions.

**MAKE-UP EXAMS:**

The dates of exams and other assignments are indicated on the class schedule. Only extreme and unusual physical or emotional circumstances will be considered as an excuse for not taking an exam or completing assignments by the due date, or receiving an Incomplete grade in the course. You MUST either telephone or e-mail me on the day of an exam if you will be absent in order to discuss the possibility of a makeup. If you fail to take an exam or turn in a paper or assignment without reasonable excuse, you will receive an “0” for that item. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day. No make-up exams will be given except in rare cases, with written documentation needed. Students who request Incomplete grades must do so in writing by the last regularly scheduled meeting of the class.

**SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY**

Cheating is defined as the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, using someone else’s work for assignments as if it were your own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of the course.

Plagiarism is defined as the use of an author’s work or ideas as if they were one’s own without giving credit to the source, including but not limited to failure to properly acknowledge a direct quote or paraphrase. Punishment for cheating and/or plagiarism is outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty section of the current Undergraduate catalogue. Students are expected to read and understand their rights and responsibilities under the Code.

Any student in this class accused of cheating or plagiarism will be given an automatic grade of “0” (zero) on the test or assignment and will be turned over to the appropriate college authorities for possible further disciplinary action (which could include suspension or expulsion from the college). Cheating and plagiarism are very serious offenses and will not be tolerated.

**RESEARCH PROJECT**

You will be required to select two short papers. The papers **must be a minimum of 5 pages**. Each paper will be worth 15% of your grade for a total of 30%. You will be able to choose which projects you want to do; however, you may not complete a project once
its due date has passed. One Paper must be completed before October 9th or you will receive a zero for one paper. You may choose from the following projects:

1. **DUE SEPTEMBER 18th**

Write a 5 page paper that involves a systematic analysis (use your notes, text and readings) of presentations of gender in one of the following:
- Music lyrics (pick a particular genre such as rock, folk, country, rap, etc.)
- A preschool book series (i.e. Dr. Seuss, the Berenstein Bears) or an elementary school reading series
- A magazine series aimed at children or young adults

**OR**

For this exercise, you are required to investigate the ways in which the popular media portray gender in stereotypical ways. Look for stereotypes associated with women or men as a whole and/or stereotypes associated with particular groups of women or men based on race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc. You may choose to do one of the following: listen to a radio station for one hour, listen to 10 songs by one group or artist, listen to once CD, watch TV for one hour and focus on either the commercials or the programming, watch one movie, look at articles or ads in one magazine, read one book/story, choose four video games, or select 10 greeting cards. How do the stereotypes portray women versus men? Discuss how the stereotypes portray particular categories of women or men to be the subordinates of those from dominant groups. Be sure to include sociological theory in your analysis.

2. **DUE OCTOBER 16th**

Gender segregation in the workplace: Students will examine 15-20 “help wanted” ads from a major US newspaper and assign each ad to a “male,” “female,” or “neutral” category.

Students should write a 5 page paper answering the following questions:
- How did you make the decisions to categorize each of the want ads? What criteria did you use?
- Do the requirements for the job vary for each of your categories?
- What is the occupational prestige of the occupations?
- Is there a gender pattern in the prestige of the occupations?
- Among the ads that mention a specific salary, is there a gender pattern?
- Are there more jobs for women in one sector of the economy than another? What about for men? Gender neutral jobs?
For this assignment, you may use your own household, or that of someone you know well. Try to use a household that includes small children. Describe the members of your household – gender, race/ethnicity, social class, and age. What percentage of each person’s time is spent on paid work? What percentage of the household income is contributed by each person who does paid work? Who pays the bills? Who decides how the household’s surplus income is spent? Who does most of the following jobs?

- child-care (feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to sleep, playing with, taking to school/daycare, driving to activities, doing homework)
- meal preparation
- bed-making
- vacuuming/dusting
- cleaning kitchen/bathroom
- taking out garbage
- mowing lawn
- gardening
- car maintenance
- pet care

If shared, about how many times per week does each person do the job? Write a 5 page paper using sociological theory to analyze your findings.

3. **DUE NOVEMBER 13th**

Attend a service of a Christian denomination or religion other than your own. Determine the extent of male/female participation and leadership. Analyze your findings using sociological theory and readings. Be sure to discuss clergy, prayer book and rituals. Write a 5 page paper using sociological theory to analyze your findings.

OR

Find articles on rape and sexual assault in the local newspaper. How is the victim portrayed? How is the assailant portrayed? What does the combined information tell us about sexual assault? Myths about sexual assault? Attitudes toward sexual assault? What does this tell us about gender roles? Analyze your findings using sociological theory and your readings. Make sure to clip all the articles, editorials, cartoons, sport stories etc. that relate to rape and sexual assault. Write a 5 page paper using sociological theory to analyze your findings.

4. **DUE DECEMBER 4th**

**GENDER ROLES—VIOLATING A NORM**
Gender roles are comprised of a set of norms or expectations about behaviors that are appropriate for women or men. Norms may be prescriptive and specify what men or women should do in social situations. Norms also may be descriptive and indicate how women or men customarily behave in social situation. In this exercise, you will identify some of the norms associated with your gender roles and then violate a norm by behaving in a manner that deviates from the norm. Then you will evaluate the results of this exercise through the series of questions that follow.

Before you begin this assignment, be certain you study the following guidelines:
A. Select a norm common in our society. Be CERTAIN it is a folkway and not a more.
B. BREAK the norm in a social setting, OBSERVE the reactions of others and yourself, and RECORD as quickly as possible those reactions (both verbal and nonverbal).
C. DO NOT:
   Break any laws or cause anyone else to break the law.
   Cause harm to yourself or anyone else.
   Do anything that is legally or morally questionable, or that could bring negative sanctions against yourself, the department, the college or your instructor.

The following format is to be followed as you write up this exercise. This paper should be 4-5 pages in length, double-spaced and typewritten.

Questions to be answered:
1) What is the norm associated with your gender role that you chose to violate? Why do you feel that this is a norm that is strongly tied to gender?
2) What exactly did you do to violate the norm?
3) How did violating this norm make you feel? What purpose do you think the norm serves?
4) How did other people react to your behavior? Did they try to restore gender role “normalcy”? If so, how?
5) How did you respond to these reactions from other people?
6) How strong of an influence do you think gender roles have on behavior? Do you think this influence might vary across time and situations? If so, how?
7) How does the enforcement of this norm tend to benefit certain groups while disadvantaging others?

OR

The purpose of this paper is to allow you to become an advocate for a specific policy related to women. The paper should have two parts. The first part should focus on the background of the issue. Examine recent governmental activity on the issue, including a brief history of federal or state efforts for handling the issue and various proposals for action. A good analysis will also include a discussion of what values these policies promote, which interests support or oppose current policies, and if, and why, these policies are inadequate. The second part should advocate a specific policy in the area. Discuss why this policy is necessary and how it would address current problems or inadequacies. In doing so, you will want to be clear about the underlying values you are assuming.
## CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>9/14-9/18</td>
<td>SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>ESSAY QUESTIONS DUE—WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30th</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
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<td>GENDER, WORK, AND THE ECONOMY</td>
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<td>A: Chapter 5</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10/12-10/16</td>
<td>GENDER AND FAMILIES</td>
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<td>A: Chapter 6</td>
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<td>D: 27, 36, 39, 40</td>
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<td><strong>PAPER #2 DUE—FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16th</strong></td>
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WEEK 10  WOMEN IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
10/19-10/23  D: 73
            T: 18, 19

WEEK 11  WOMEN, HEALTH AND REPRODUCTION
10/26-10/30  A: Chapter 7
            D: 18, 63-65
            T: 3, 9, 23

WEEK 12  EXAMINATION #2
11/2-11/6  ESSAYS DUE—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd
            MULTIPLE CHOICE—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4th

WEEK 13  WOMEN AND RELIGION
11/9-11/13  A: Chapter 8
            D: 8, 72
            PAPER #3 DUE—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13th

WEEK 14  WOMEN, CRIME, AND DEVIANCE
11/16-11/20  A: Chapter 9
            D: 45, 59, 61
            T: 12, 26
            EXTRA CREDIT DUE, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16th.

WEEK 15  GENDER, EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
11/23-11/27  A: Chapter 10
            D: 41-44
            T: 5, 16, 25
            NO CLASS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27th

WEEK 16  WOMEN, POWER, AND POLITICS
11/30-12/4  A: Chapter 11
            D: 62
            PAPER #4 DUE—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th

Week 17  ESSAY QUESTIONS DUE—MONDAY, DECEMBER 7th
12/8  MULTIPLE CHOICE—MONDAY, DECEMBER 7th

This schedule is tentative and will be modified as necessitated by class discussions and outside speakers.
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EXTRA CREDIT
SOC 3352—GENDER ROLES
MERYL G. NASON, SENIOR LECTURER

Below you will find one additional writing assignments. Please note the date it is due. You \textbf{MAY NOT} turn it in \textbf{LATE.}

\textbf{MOVIE REVIEW}

Here is a partial list of movies which deal with the topic of gender. There are many others and please feel free to talk with me if you would like to watch a movie not on the list. You need my approval if you would like to review a movie not on the list. Select \textbf{ONE} movie to watch and evaluate. After watching the movie, you are to write a 3-4 page double-spaced paper evaluating the movie. Be specific in your discussion. What kinds of issues concerning gender were shown in the movie? Which of the perspectives we have discussed in class best explain the behavior shown? Can the behavior be explained by more than one perspective? The review is worth a maximum of 25 points. The review is due no later than \textbf{NOVEMBER 16$^{th}$}.  

\begin{tabular}{ll}
Tootsie & Million Dollar Baby  
Kramer versus Kramer & Yentl  
Some Like It Hot & GI Jane  
Boys Don’t Cry & Victor Victoria  
North Country & 9 To 5  
Transamerica & A League of Their Own  
Stand By Me & Three Men and a Baby  
Raging Bull & Billy Elliott  
The Birdcage & Julie and Julia  
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