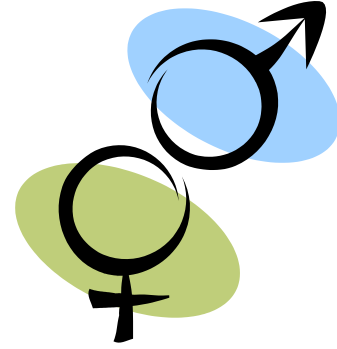


SOCIOLOGY – 023
SEX, GENDER, AND SOCIETY
FALL 2009

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

Location: J. Walter Wilson, Room 202



Instructor: Carrie E. Spearin, Ph.D.
Office: Maxcy Hall, Room 105
Phones: (401) 863-3668 or call the Sociology Department
Email: Carrie_Spearin@brown.edu
Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and Fridays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

I. Course Description.

This course is an introduction to the sociological study of sex and gender. In this course, we will explore how sexuality is perceived, defined, and experienced in the context of society. We will also investigate how sexuality influences our lives, is reflected in social norms, attitudes and beliefs, through public and private policies and practices, and social institutions. This class also explores how prevalent gender differences really are in our society and examines how gender is socially constructed.

We will be reading about, analyzing, and discussing a variety of topics centering on the meaning of sexuality in our society, the intersection of sexuality, sex, and gender, as well as how “gender” creates differences in all aspects of life for women and men. While some lecture material will be presented, much of the classroom experience will be spent discussing issues relevant to the readings and participating in classroom exercises. This course is organized so that we may share our personal experiences, integrating them with the readings in order to explore each topic area more fully. I hope the class provides an environment in which we may learn from each other as well as from the assigned readings.

II. Course Objectives.

The major objectives for this course are to: (1) understand the sociological perspective as it relates to sexuality, sex, and gender, (2) introduce you to the core theories and methods sociologists use to study sex and gender, (3) develop an understanding of the social construction of gender and its effects on society, (4) understand the institutionalization of sexuality and gender in politics, economics, language, and the family, (5) critically examine one’s own individual behavior as well as analyze the actions and behaviors of those around them in reference to gender, and (6) encourage students to think about and make connections between theory, research, and practice and to consider the implications of research for interventions, education, and public policy.

III. Course Prerequisites.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

IV. Course Expectations.

There will be many new terms and definitions that must be learned through study, discussion, and homework exercises. Class attendance is important for discussion, to answer your questions, and to obtain my perspective on the material. Please note, the material must be read on schedule and learning is cumulative. Each new idea will continue to be used in subsequent lectures and assignments.

V. Required Texts and Readings.

Aulette, Judy, Judith Wittner, and Kristin Blakely. 2009. *Gendered Worlds* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Additional readings are also assigned. All additional readings will be placed on *MyCourses*.

VI. Course Requirements.

There are six components to the course: in-class participation, homework assignments, a journal, class debate assignments, one take-home midterm exam, and a final research presentation/project.

In-Class Participation. There will be several opportunities for in-class participation/group assignments over the semester. These exercises are intended to give you an opportunity to apply the concepts presented in the readings, as well as the lectures and discussions. You will receive full credit for in-class participation if you are present for class on those days assignments are given. These in-class assignments can not be made up. If you miss class, you will receive no credit for that day.

If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you have missed. The professor will not give students copies of class lecture notes nor will the professor use office hours to repeat a missed lecture.

Homework Assignments. There will be three (3) homework assignments. These short written assignments (5-7 pages) will be formally graded. Full credit will only be given to complete assignments passed in on time. Partial credit will be given for incomplete assignments. Those assignments submitted one class session late will receive half credit. After this time, assignments will not be accepted. The only exception is illness or other circumstances beyond your control (such as a religious holiday), which you should explain in writing when you submit the late work. Through these homework assignments, students should strive to demonstrate their understanding of the material, organize their thoughts, present a critical review, rather than a summary, and incorporate provocative thought.

Journal. Students are expected to keep a journal that addresses how the topics discussed in class and the corresponding readings have influenced and continue to affect their perception of themselves and others in society. This is an informal and private style of writing. Each journal entry should be between 1-2 pages and students are required to complete a total of 6 entries (only one entry per week). There are a total of 13 weeks between the start of the semester and the journal due date, so please plan accordingly. Journals should be typed and double-spaced.

For the most part, you have considerable freedom in how you choose to express yourself and the subject matter you choose to address, as long as it is relevant to this course. You may decide to stick to the topics covered in class each week or you may also examine and analyze images of gender in the media. On **October 30th**, you will be required to submit at least 3 journal entries. All 6 entries will be passed in on the final day of class (**12/4**).

Class Debates. Four separate in-class debates are scheduled during the semester. Once the “shopping” period has ended, students will be divided up into groups and given either the pro or con side of a topic related to sex, sexuality, or gender. Students must develop arguments that support the view they are assigned, whether or not they actually support that view. Students are expected to research the topic and prepare a set of notes they can use during the debate. All other students become the “audience” and are expected to actively participate by asking questions and making comments. Each audience member is required to submit to me 5 questions that may possibly be asked at the debate. Along with this, audience members will also pass in short answers to these questions taking both the pro and con side.

Class debates/discussions of the issues we study can stimulate strong feelings. Please be respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreements. Comments should also advance the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs and all comments should be delivered in normal tones and in a non-aggressive manner. Personal attacks, interrupting your instructor or fellow students, using the discussion to argue for political positions, using raised tones or yelling, and ignoring your instructor’s authority are unacceptable behaviors and can result in academic penalties ranging from a lowered grade, to dismissal, to failing the course.

Exam. There will be two take-home mid-term examinations (**10/21** and **11/23**). These exams will cover material from the course lectures, readings, and class discussions. All students must pass in the take-home exam on time. Failure to pass in your exam will result in a failure. Please plan your schedules accordingly.

Presentation Project. For the final project, students are expected to choose an experience, topic, or event (wedding, marriage, household labor, work, religion, childrearing, politics, voting, etc.) that is related to sex, sexuality, or gender and study how it is similar or different in another culture (outside of the United States). Working in small groups (no more than 3), students will produce a poster that addresses this comparative work. Students should expect to read at least 2 peer reviewed journal articles about this topic and to write a 3-4 page summary paper (typed and double-spaced and complete with bibliography) comparing this culture’s views on sex, sexuality, or gender with these same views held by those in the United States (due **12/11**). More information on the final project and presentation will be provided after the “shopping” period has ended.

VII. Grading.

No curve is involved in this course. You will receive the grade that you earn. Your final course grade will be based on the following components and according to the following distribution:

Attendance/In-class assignments	5%
Homework Assignments	25%
Journal	10%
In-class debates	15%
Exams	20%
<u>Final research project</u>	<u>25%</u>
Total	100%

VII. Course Policies and Etiquette.

Please come to class and be in class on time. Tardiness, in addition to absences, will affect your grade and are strongly discouraged. Unless you become ill or speak to me about leaving early for a specific purpose, expect to stay for the entire class.

Plagiarism can occur by accident, in working together, or when work is borrowed. Working together in small groups can be fun and helpful but, if you write your assignments together, it may appear that the work is too identical. It is safest to work together at the reviewing stage, but not in the writing stage of your work. Take steps to insure that plagiarism does not occur.

Incomplete grades will not be awarded. Extensions will be considered only under extreme circumstances pertaining to family or medical emergencies. Such circumstances must be documented in written form from a dean or a doctor. Cell phones and SMS are not tolerated.

I will be unavailable to interact via email in the evening and most times during the weekends. However, I will do my best to reply to your inquiries as soon as possible.

VIII. Schedule of Readings and Assignments

You are responsible for the assignments on the dates listed. You should read ahead as some assignments will require planning and extra time. Please note: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the course of the semester.

Week 1 (September 9th & 11th)
Course Introduction and the Definition of the Sex and Gender
Reading: Barnett & Rivers, "Men are from Earth, and so are Women"
Assignment: Homework #1 distributed

Week 2 (September 14th, 16th, & 18th)
Gender All Around Us
Reading: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 1
Assignment: Homework #1 due (9/18)

- Week 3** (September 21st, 23rd, and 25th)
Bodies and Genders
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 2
 Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes”
 Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes Revisited”
 Lucal, “What It Means to be a Gendered Me”
Assignment: Choose debate groups (9/23)
- Week 4** (September 28th, 30th, & October 1st)
Socialization of Sex and Gender
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 3
 West & Zimmerman, “Doing Gender”
Assignments: Debate I (9/30)
 Choose groups for final project (10/1)
- Week 5** (October 5th, 7th, & 9th)
Sexualities
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 4
 Selections from Carpenter’s, “*Virginity Lost*”
- Week 6** (October 12th, 14th, & 16th) – NO CLASS October 12th
Education: Learning to be “little boys” and “little girls”
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 5
 Pollitt, “Why Boys Don’t Play with Dolls”
 Selections from Thorne’s, “*Gender Play*”
Assignments: Research overview I due (10/16)
 Mid-term Exam I distributed
- Week 7** (October 19th, 21st, & 23rd)
Economy and Work
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 6
 Williams, “The glass escalator: hidden advantages for men in the
 “female” professions”
Assignments: Mid-term Exam I due (10/21)
 Debate II (10/23)
- Week 8** (October 26th, 28th, & 30th)
Gender in Partnerships and Parenthood
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 7
 Gerson, “Dilemmas of Involved Fatherhood”
 Syfers, “Why I Want a Wife”
Assignments: Journal entries (3) due (10/30)
 Homework Assignment #2 distributed

- Week 9** (November 2nd, 4th, & 6th)
Sexuality, Aggression, and Violence
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 8
Sanday, “Rape-Prone Versus Rape-Free Campus Cultures”
Assignment: Debate III (11/4)
- Week 10** (November 9th, 11th, & 13th)
Health and Illness, The State, Sexual Politics, and Public Policy
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapters 9 and 10
Padgug, “Gay Villain, Gay Hero: Homosexuality and the Social Construction of AIDS”
Assignment: Research overview II due (11/13)
- Week 11** (November 16th, 18th, & 20th)
The Influence of Media and Popular Culture
Readings: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 11
Sheiner, “Odyssey of a Feminist Pornographer”
Assignments: Debate IV (11/18)
Mid-term Exam II distributed
- Week 12** (November 23rd, 25th, & 27th) – **NO CLASS November 25th and 27th**
Religion and Tradition
Reading: *Gendered Worlds*, Chapter 11
Assignments: Mid-term Exam II due (11/23)
Homework #3 distributed
- Week 13** (November 30th, December 2nd, & 4th)
Your Turn!: International Views on Sex, Sexuality, and Gender
Assignments: Class Presentations
Final Journals (12/4)
- Week 14** (December 11th)
Final Research Summaries Due – 10:00am
Please place a hard copy in Prof. Spearin’s mailbox
Maxcy Hall, Room 101
Electronic versions will NOT be accepted!