

Sociology 024.01—Gender and Society

Instructor Patricia Arend

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 to 1:00 and by appointment

What is gender? Why is the study of gender important for contemporary society? In this course we will probe how it comes to be, how it impacts our lives, how it relates to social inequality, and resistances to gendering. We will conceptualize gender as socially constructed and then examine the various ways in which notions of femininity and masculinity are reconstructed within our institutions and cultural productions. We will study the ways that gender inequality is reproduced at the structural level of society and impacts a person's life and life chances within the institutions of the workplace, family, media, health care, and religion. Likewise we will examine the social and political relationship between gender and sexuality, body image, beauty ideals, and violence.

We will also examine gender through the ways in which it “intersects” or comes into play with other socially constructed differences, including race, class, and sexuality. It is important to bear in mind that gender does not mean female, just as race does not mean a person of color. The assumption that whiteness is any less a race or maleness any less a gender will be unraveled throughout the semester. We will also discuss feminism, how it became a four letter word, and how feminist scholarship and activism has and continues to work toward equality for those pushed to the peripheries of society due to their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and/or sexual identity. The contemporary study of gender was brought to the academy by feminists, making it impossible to understand contemporary gender studies adequately without grappling with feminist theory.

Readings: Almost all the readings for this course are available in your two readers, which you can purchase at the bookstore. They are: Shaw and Lee's *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings* and Cohen's *Men and Masculinity: A Text Reader*. The remaining articles may be accessed through the O'Neill library course reserves website. Readings are listed under Arend.

Grading: Your grade for this class will be based on the following components:

Class Participation (see below):	20 points
Take-home Midterm	30 points
5-6 page Film Analysis Paper	20 points
Final Examination:	30 points
Total:	100 points

Class Participation: This class deals with complex ideas that require regular **completion of reading** and regular **attendance**. To ensure that you do the reading, three pop quizzes will be given during the semester. Each of these quizzes will be worth four points. The remaining eight class participation points will be based on attendance and your in-class contribution to the discussion of the readings.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to comply with the standards for academic honesty outlined in the Boston College Student Guide (<http://www.bc.edu/offices/odsd/services/guide/part4/>). Cheating on the final will result in a grade of “0” for the test. Plagiarized writing assignments will also receive a grade of “0,” and may result in the notification of the academic dean.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Part I: The Social Construction of Gender

Introduction to Gender and Society

Tuesday, September 6: Introduction

Thursday, September 8: Read Christine Ward Gailey "Evolutionary Perspectives on Gender Hierarchy" on reserve

Tuesday, September 13: Read Introduction to Chapter One, Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, "A Day Without Feminism," Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon "Dear Sisters," bell hooks "Feminist Politics: Where We Stand," Allan G. Johnson "Shame, Guilt, and Responsibility," and Deborah L. Rhode "Denials of Inequality" in Shaw and Lee.

Learning to Do Gender

Thursday, September 15: Read Lila Leibowitz "Perspectives on the Evolution of Sex Differences" on reserve and Judith Lorber "The Social Construction of Gender" in Cohen.

Tuesday, September 20: Read Lois Gould "X: A Fabulous Child's Story" and Virginia Sapiro "The Plurality of Gender-Based Realities" in Shaw and Lee and James G. Peoples "The Cultural Construction of Gender and Manhood" in Cohen.

Thursday, September 22: Read Mariah Burton Nelson "Boys Will Be Boys and Girls Will Not" in Shaw and Lee and Donald F. Sabo and Joe Panepinto "Football Ritual and the Social Reproduction of Masculinity" in Cohen.

Gender, Race, Class, and Sexuality

Tuesday, September 27: Read Introduction to Chapter Two, Patricia Hill-Collins "Toward a New Vision..." and Peggy McIntosh "White Privilege and Male Privilege" in Shaw and Lee

Thursday, September 29: Read Suzanne Pharr "Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism" in Shaw and Lee and Michael S. Kimmel "Masculinity as Homophobia..." and Tommi Avicolli "He Defies You Still: The Memoirs of a Sissy" in Cohen.

Tuesday, October 4: Read Michelle Fine et al "(In) Secure Times: Constructing White Working-Class Masculinities in the Late 20th Century" in Cohen

Thursday, October 6: **In-Class Film "Tough Guise"**

Gender on/in/and the Body

- Tuesday, October 11: Read Introduction to Chapter 5, Gloria Steinem "If Men Could Menstruate," Veronica Chambers "Dreadlocked" and Lisa Miya-Jervis "Hold That Nose" in Shaw and Lee.
- Thursday, October 13: Marjorie Garber "Spare Parts: The Surgical Construction of Gender" on reserve
- Tuesday, October 18: Read Introduction to Chapter 6, Adrienne Germaine "Man-Made Threats to Women's Health" and Margaret Sanger "My Fight for Birth Control" in Shaw and Lee. **Take-home Midterm handed out.**
- Thursday, October 20: Read Christopher Kilmartin "Surviving and Thriving: Men and Physical Health" and Terrence Real "Men's Hidden Depression" in Cohen.

Part II: Gender and Structured Inequality

Religion

- Tuesday, October 25: **Take-home Midterm Due.** No Reading. **In-Class Film "The Burning Times"**
- Thursday, October 27 Read Introduction to Chapter Twelve, Paula Gunn Allen "Grandmother of the Sun" and Starhawk "Witchcraft and Women's Culture" in Shaw and Lee.
- Tuesday, November 1: Read Elizabeth Cady Stanton "Introduction to *The Woman's Bible*," Karen McCarthy Brown "Fundamentalism and the Control of Women," Nadia Hijab "Islam, Social Change, and the Reality of Arab Women's Lives" in Shaw and Lee.

Work

- Thursday, November 3: Read Introduction to Chapter Eight and Sharlene Hesse-Biber and Gregg Lee Carter "A Brief History of Working Women" in Shaw and Lee and Arlie Russell Hochschild "Giving at the Office" in Cohen.
- Tuesday, November 8: Read Cohen and Durst "Leaving Work and Staying Home," William Julius Wilson "The Meaning and Significance of Race," and James Woods "Dimensions of the Closet" in Cohen
- Thursday, November 10: Read Priscilla Alexander "Prostitution: A Difficult Issue for Feminists," Barbara Ehrenreich "Maid to Order: The Politics of Other Women's Work," and Cynthia Enloe "The Globetrotting Sneaker" in Shaw and Lee.

Culture

- Tuesday, November 15: Read Introduction to Chapter Nine, Virginia Wolf "Thinking About Shakespeare's Sister," and Audre Lorde "Poetry is Not a Luxury" in Shaw and Lee
- Thursday, November 17: Read Jill Berne Henke et al "Construction of the Female Self: Feminist Readings of the Disney Heroine," Joan Morgan "From Fly-Girls to Bitches and Hos" and Nina Hartley "Confessions of a Feminist Porno Star" in Shaw and Lee.
- Tuesday, November 22: **Film Analysis Paper Due** No reading. Film Dreamworlds II

Violence

Thursday, November 24: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, November 29: Read Introduction to Chapter Ten and Gloria Steinem "Supremacy Crimes" in Shaw and Lee, A. Ayres Boswell and Joan Z. Spade "Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture..." in Cohen and Fred Pelka "Raped: A Male Survivor Breaks His Silence" on reserve

Thursday, December 1: Read Women in Action "Violence Against Women: An Issue of Human Rights" and Fiona Lee "Militarism and Sexual Violence" in Shaw and Lee and Michael P. Johnson "Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: Two Forms of Violence Against Women" in Cohen

Challenging Gender Hierarchy

Tuesday, December 6: Read Introduction to Chapter Thirteen and Michael Kimmel "Real Men Join the Movement in Shaw and Lee and Jon Morgan "The Feminist Man's Manifesto" in Cohen

Thursday, December 8: Read Lisa Maria Hogeland "Fear of Feminism: Why Young Women Get the Willies" and Suzanne Pharr "Taking the High Road" in Shaw and Lee.

In Class Final Exam: Date/Time TBA